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TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON INSERVICE EDUCATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education. It was postulated that until the nature of the beliefs and activities of teachers in relation to inservice education are known, it will not be possible to organise inservice education activities that are considered effective from the viewpoint of both the participants and the organizers.

The concept of symbolic interactionism guided the study and the general approach to inductive research as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was adopted. Data were collected over a twelve-month period using the field research strategies of semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observation. The researcher conducted 77 arranged interviews with 86 teachers in two school systems and attended 6 days of inservice education sessions as a participant observer. In addition, she talked informally with many teachers and interested others on the topic.

The findings of the study reveal that there is not one single perspective on inservice education held by teachers but rather that teachers classify inservice education into the following four discrete groups of learning activities, each of which they perceive differently:

- -- Group One: mandatory, formal inservice education activities offered in conjunction with a compulsory program change.
- -- Group Two: other types of mandatory, formal inservice education activities.
- -- Group Three: formal inservice education activities of a voluntary nature.

-- Group Four: non-formal inservice education activities.

Traditionally, it has been assumed that teachers attend formal inservice education activities because they are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and wish to improve their effectiveness in the classroom. The findings of the study suggest that this assumption is inaccurate. Only at formal inservice education activities organized in conjunction with a compulsory program change do the goals of participants agree with those of organizers and support the assumptions made in the literature; that is, teachers attend such activities in order to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior (whether such a change occurs is outside the scope of this study). Teachers attend other formal inservice education activities in order to have the following needs, which they consider to be very important, satisfied.

- -- In order to obtain information and materials which they can use to enliven their present classroom practices but which require no major changes in ideology or current practices.
- -- In order to obtain confirmation that their present practices are appropriate and acceptable.
- -- In order to become acquainted with the latest developments in the field of education.
- -- In order to associate with adults instead of children and exchange information with colleagues.
- -- In order to obtain recognition that a worthwhile job is being performed.
- -- In order to enjoy a mentally stimulating break from routine.

The teachers included in the study do seek to maintain or improve

their effectiveness in the classroom, but the ways in which they do so are not, as is assumed in the literature, by participating in formal inservice education activities, but rather by being involved in the following non-formal activities: ongoing, in-school contacts with colleagues, in particular with those colleagues who have a similar teaching assignment; reading professional literature; participating in program development; having student teachers and watching others teach; and, attending extra-curricular activities which have a spin-off to the classroom.

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations for improving the effectiveness of inservice education have been made. In addition, various hypotheses suggested by the data have been presented and connections with the theory of cognitive dissonance have been made in an attempt to explain and predict teachers' beliefs and activities in relation to inservice education.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

NEED FOR THE STUDY

It has long been recognized in English speaking countries that preservice teacher education represents but the minimum prerequisite for entry into the teaching profession and that teachers must continue to develop professionally throughout their teaching career. Consequently, in such countries inservice education activities have been offered since the late 19th century (Corey, 1957; Richey, 1957; Stephens and Hartman, 1978; Bacon, 1980). These activities are seen as a means of ensuring that practising teachers are exposed to new techniques, programs and innovations and are given assistance with classroom-related and subject-related areas of concern.

Given the rapid rate of technological growth occurring in our present society, the aging and relatively static teacher population, the current public dissatisfaction with the products of the educational system, the ever-expanding role being assigned by society to educational institutions and the increasing importance being accorded to the continuing education of professionals, the need for the continuing professional development of teachers appears to be self-evident.

Bruce (1980:140) considers that "in the 1980's innovation and growth will be found in the inservice education of practising teachers" and others agree (Dawson, 1978; Howsam, 1980; Joyce, 1980; Wood and Thompson, 1980); it certainly appears to be an area of interest and concern if the seemingly endless array of articles and texts on the topic is taken as an indicator. That there is dissatisfaction with inservice education activities is evident from the number of articles that attempt to pinpoint the weaknesses of programs and suggest remedies (Wood and Thompson, 1980; Zigarmi, Betz and Jensen, 1977).

The premise underlying the activities organized to ensure that teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes are current and appropriate is that "all teachers (are) interested in improving their professional competence" (Spindler, 1959:46) and that inservice education activities will contribute to such an improvement. Traditionally, these activities have tended to have a lecture or workshop format and be organized for teachers by others, who assume they know what teachers need and/or want. The criterion used to determine the effectiveness of an activity is an overt change in the classroom behavior of participants. However, although the alleged goal of inservice education is to change the classroom behavior of teachers and thereby improve their effectiveness in the classroom, despite vast expenditures by governments, by school boards, by professional councils, by universities and by teachers themselves (Fennell, Hill and Thiessen, 1980; ATA News, 1981), large numbers of teachers do not appear to be attending inservice activities voluntarily or with enthusiasm; those who do attend do not appear to be changing their classroom behavior in the ways that the organizers anticipate and advocate and the literature recommends (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Cooper and Hunt, 1978; Brayne, 1980). As Howey and Joyce (1978) point out, inservice education does not appear to be in the best of health. Indeed, inservice education has been described as "the slum of American education" (Wood and Thompson, 1980:374) and it appears that many of those attending the activities come not for the reasons envisaged by the organizers but for a variety of other reasons (Farrer, DeSanctis and Cohen, 1980:168). Consequently, as West (1975:35) points out, "many of our grand plans for educational change have failed to have major impact or have been co-opted." King, Hayes and Newman (1977:686) pose a pertinent question:

> Why do teachers, who almost universally appear eager to improve their professional performance, frequently respond with disdain or outright hostility to local efforts to "inservice" them?

An extensive review of the literature reveals that little formal, systematic research has been conducted in the area of inservice education; much of the literature is of a superficial nature with no research basis, presents the personal views of the writers, appears to be based on conjecture, and addresses the symptoms (low participation rates, low adoption rates) not the underlying reasons, the 'why.'

Inservice education traditionally has had a deficit and nomothetic or organizational approach. Others have determined the deficiencies of teachers, organized what they consider to be appropriate learning experiences and offered them in an institutional setting. The popular approach being advocated at present in an attempt to increase the effectiveness of inservice activities by minimizing the generally passive role played by teachers in their own professional development is to have teachers identify areas of need through the use of needs assessments and participate in the planning of activities (Wilen and

Kindsvatter, 1978; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Young, 1980; Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982; Conran and Chase, 1982) yet such approaches do not guarantee success. On the one hand, the teacher often confuses his needs with his wants, and even those advocating needs assessments indicate that other means must be employed to ensure that the needs of teachers have been accurately identified (Jones and Hayes, 1980; Arends, Hersh and Turner, 1978). On the other hand, organizers often abuse the concept of needs assessments by using them to justify offering topics selected in advance.

Perhaps, before suggesting a plethora of antidotes to combat teachers' alleged indifference or hostility to inservice education, as perceived by writers, researchers, administrators and organizers, and the so-called ineffectiveness, from the organizers' point of view, of such activities, teachers' perspectives on inservice education should be determined. Given this information, it would be possible to ascertain if the assumptions made about teachers in the literature agree with teachers' perceptions of inservice education, or if those responsible for organizing inservice activities are basing them on an inaccurate set of assumptions which reflect writers' and organizers' rationale for inservice but not necessarily participants'.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education. There is a paucity of formal, systematic research on inservice education in spite of extensive literature in this field. Most of the formal research in the area of inservice education has attempted to measure the effectiveness of organized activities by determining the adoption rate of the practices presented. Built into such research are the assumptions and biases of the researcher regarding teachers' reasons for attending the activity, the appropriate presentation format and the criteria to use to determine the effectiveness of the activity. The little research that has been conducted to determine teachers' views has focused on external factors such as the preferred length, location, timing, and so forth of organized inservice activities and has used questionnaires to collect the data (Brimm and Tollett, 1974; Ingersoll, 1976; Betz and Jensen, 1977; Cheately, 1977; Schoedinger, 1977; Anderson, 1979; Zirkel and Albert, 1979; Burke, 1980; Small and Buski, 1982). Questionnaires, as Webb and Webb (1968) and Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) point out, are satisfactory only when the researcher knows the answers desired, otherwise the researcher is imposing his beliefs upon the respondents. Participation does not appear to have been studied from the perspective of the individual. The perspective of the individual is always of importance but particularly so when the intervention strategies organized by others for teachers consistently fail to have the expected and desired results.

Houle (1963) sought to determine the who, what, when, where and why of adult learners, focusing on the individual because, "if we are ever to understand the total phenomenon of continuing education, we must begin by understanding the nature, beliefs, and the actions of those who take part to the highest degree" (Houle, 1963:10). The beliefs and activities of adult learners as determined through in-depth interviews revealed patterns that shed light on the meaning of continuing education (Houle, 1963:14). In this study an attempt was made to further an understanding of the total phenomenon of inservice education by determining the beliefs and activities--the who, what, when, where and why--of those who participate in, or are expected to participate in inservice education. It was posited that their beliefs and activities would fall into patterns and that the portrayal of such patterns would provide an insight into the meaning for teachers of inservice education. It was further posited that teachers' perspectives on inservice education would help to explain the relative ineffectiveness of inservice education activities in attaining the goals of organizers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Given that the field of inservice education lacks an adequate theory base and that the beliefs and activities of teachers as they relate to inservice education have not been ascertained, an inductive study to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education was considered to be appropriate and desirable. A methodology and techniques which would permit the researcher to determine what Bruyn (1966) terms inner perspective, or the understanding of people from their own frame of reference, were sought. As Douglas (1976:8) points out, the goals chosen should determine the general methods used and thus the kinds of data produced.

For this study the concept of symbolic interactionism which assumes that behavior is to be understood as a process in which the individual shapes and controls his conduct by taking into account the expectations of others with whom he interacts (Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss, 1961:19) was considered to be appropriate. Herbert Blumer, recognized as a major advocate of symbolic interactionism, considers that this is a methodological stance that respects the nature of the empirical world. He defines the term symbolic interaction as:

> ... the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behavior (Blumer, 1978:91).

Thus according to symbolic interactionists people live in social and intellectual worlds of their own creation (Lindesmith, Strauss and Denzin, 1977:30). That the meaning of objects for a person arises fundamentally out of the way they are defined to him by others with whom he interacts has noteworthy consequences, states Blumer (1969:11):

> ... it gives us a different picture of the environment or milieu of human beings. From their standpoint the environment consists only of the objects that the given human beings recognize and know ... people may be living side by side yet be living in different worlds ... It is the world of their objects with which people have to deal and toward which they develop their actions. It follows that in order to understand the action of people it is necessary to identify their world of objects.

The term perspective is one used in social psychology, particularly by symbolic interactionists to indicate how individuals perceive their world (Manis and Meltzer, 1972). According to symbolic interactionists a perspective is:

> ... an ordered view of one's world--what is taken for granted about the attributes of various objects, events, and human nature. It is an order of things remembered and expected as well as things actually perceived, an organized conception of what is plausible and what is possible; it constitutes the matrix through which one perceives his environment. The fact that men have such ordered perspectives enables them to conceive of their ever-changing world as relatively stable, orderly and predictable. As Riezler puts it, one's perspective is an outline scheme which, running ahead of experience, defines and guides it (Shibutani, 1972:163).

Except for the fact that actions are included in perspectives, the following definition of the term perspective is in agreement with Shibutani's (1972:163) and is the one used in this study:

> We use the term perspective to refer to a co-ordinated set of ideas and actions a person uses in dealing with some problematic situation, to refer to a person's ordinary way of thinking and feeling about and acting in such a situation. These thoughts and actions are co-ordinated in the sense that the actions flow reasonably, from the actor's point of view, from the ideas contained in the perspective. Similarly, the ideas can be seen by an observer to be one of the possible sets of ideas which might form the underlying rationale for the person's actions and are seen by the actor as providing a justification for acting as he does (Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss, 1961:34).

Thus for the symbolic interactionist a perspective is a reflective, socially-derived interpretation of that which the individual encounters which then serves as a basis for the actions he constructs; the interactionist views human beings as rational and continually involved in giving meaning to their social world (Janesick, 1982b:2).

According to Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss (1961:436), a perspective contains the following elements:

> a definition of the situation in which the actors are involved, a statement of the goals they are trying to

> achieve, a set of ideas specifying what kinds of activities are expedient and proper, and a set of activities or practices congruent with them.

In this study the preceding description of the elements of a perspective guided the presentation of the findings. In order to collect the desired data, Blumer (1969:48) advocates naturalistic study, or a direct examination of the actual empirical social world. Although participant observation tends to be the major data gathering technique used by those who subscribe to the concept of symbolic interactionism, teachers' beliefs and activities as they relate to inservice education were not considered to be a phenomenon that was readily observable by this technique. Rather it was considered that in-depth, elite and specialized interviewing as described by Dexter (1970) would be a more appropriate major data gathering technique with participant observation being used to gather additional data. In-depth interviews are based on the belief that people know why they act in certain ways and are considered to be an appropriate means of obtaining information on topics where the respondents' points of view and inner feelings are important to the research goals (Dexter, 1970; Wiseman and Aron, 1970:31; Sanders, 1974:160).

Following the inductive approach suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1965a; 1966; 1967; Glaser, 1978) and employing the data analysis techniques identified by Turner (1981), the data were collected, coded and analyzed, and categories were developed. The categories developed revealed patterns which offer an insight into teachers' perspectives on inservice education.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

perspective: a co-ordinated set of ideas and actions a person uses in dealing with some problematic situation; a person's ordinary way of thinking and feeling about and acting in such a situation.

teacher: any person with a teaching certificate.

inservice education: unless otherwise defined, learning experiences which may affect the classroom behavior of the teacher and which occur after the teacher has successfully completed preservice education.

professional development days: usually two days per school year which school systems in Alberta set aside for the professional development of their staff; on these school days, students do not attend school and teachers attend organized activities which normally are held in the schools.

convention: two days of organized inservice sessions for teachers held annually for teachers in Alberta, usually in the early spring, and arranged for teachers by the local of their professional association, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA); often several locals combine resources and hold their convention in the meeting rooms of hotels at a central location, usually a large urban centre.

professional development fund: money allocated by the school districts included in this study to individual schools within the district for the professional development of the staff; a professional development committee within each school determines how the money is to be spent.

specialist councils: The professional association of the teachers included in the study, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), has organized councils in all the major subject and service areas to ensure that teachers maintain their competence in the particular specialities for which they have responsibility; these councils regularly organize workshops, seminars, and so forth.

interview: a face-to-face verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinions or belief from another person or persons.

elite and specialized interviewing: an interview with any interviewee who in terms of the current purposes of the interviewer is given the following treatment:

1. the interviewee's definition of the situation is stressed,
2. the interviewee is encouraged to structure the account of the situation,
3. and the interviewee introduces to a considerable extent his notions of what he regards as relevant, instead of relying upon the interviewer's notions of relevance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. This study is limited to teachers working in two school systems.
2. This study is focused on teachers' perspectives on inservice education; the perspectives of others involved in teacher inservice education are not included.
3. The participants are volunteers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The focus of this study was teachers' perspectives on inservice education. The intent was to determine teachers' views on inservice education, not their responses to predetermined questions posed by the researcher. Consequently, the desired information was obtained through open-ended, informal, guided but not structured interviews. Such an approach permitted the interview to be focused but allowed the teachers to develop the topic and share their views in whatever manner they desired. The set of issues that the researcher desired to explore was known to her but not to the respondents. These issues were not pursued in any particular order and the actual wording of the questions was not determined in advance. It was anticipated that the data gathered during the course of the interview would provide answers to the following broad questions:

1. How do teachers define the terms 'inservice education' and 'professional development'?
2. What are the attitudes and beliefs of teachers towards inservice education?
3. What is the nature of teachers' wants regarding inservice education?
4. What benefits do teachers expect to receive from attending inservice education activities?
5. What is the nature of teachers' complaints regarding inservice education activities?
6. Do teachers consider that there are ways to grow professionally other than by attending formal, organised inservice activities?
7. Do teachers' inservice education needs change over time?

8. What are teachers' views on topics and presenters?
9. What are teachers' views on attendance at and timing of inservice activities?
10. What are teachers' views on the role of central office and the university in inservice education?

CONCLUSION

The researcher agrees with Wilen and Kindsvatter (1978:395):

> Inservice education, especially when considered as a process, needs soundly conceived research as the means to transcend the common wisdom approach which is characteristic of most current practices.

At present the literature suffers from an excess of common wisdom but a shortage of formal research, particularly research in the inductive mode which attempts to determine what is rather than impose preconceived assumptions upon the area to be investigated. As Blumer (1969:32, 33) states:

> the predominant procedure is to take for granted one's premises about the nature of the empirical world and not to examine these premises; ... Instead of going to the empirical social world in the first and last instances, resort is made instead to a priori theoretical schemes, to sets of unverified concepts, and to canonized protocols of research procedure.

Literature and research in the area of inservice education has been based on the following unverified assumptions. The term inservice education is equated with formal activities organized for teachers by others and it is assumed that attending such activities is the method teachers use to continue their professional development. It is assumed that teachers are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and attend activities in order to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior. Consequently, the effectiveness of an activity is judged by the adoption rate of participants upon their return to the classroom. All change is considered to be an improvement and those teachers who do not change their behavior are considered to be less competent and dedicated professionals than those who do. It is assumed that the introduction of change is relatively easy for teachers. It is assumed that teachers are involved in an ongoing inservice education program, that only such types of activities are worthwhile and that piecemeal, one of activities serve no useful purpose. Rarely is it considered that teachers may attend formal activities for reasons other than to obtain information which they will use to immediately change their classroom behavior; that teachers may consider activities to be of value despite the presenter and his topic; or, that teachers may continue their professional education in ways other than through their involvement in organized activities. In other words, others have imposed upon teachers a very narrow perception of inservice education and used their assumptions to generate lists of shortcomings, criteria for effective inservice education, guidelines, models, and recommendations. Yet despite this over-abundance of information, it is generally acknowledged that inservice education continues to be less than successful from the viewpoint of both the participants and the organizers.

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education, that is the ideas and actions that teachers use to deal with inservice education. It was postulated that until it is understood how teachers make sense of their world in relation to inservice education, until it is known how their ideas in relation to inservice education form the basis for their actions, it will be impossible for inservice education to be considered effective by both participants and organizers. Thus an inductive, analytical and descriptive study which sought to reveal the beliefs and activities of teachers in relation to inservice education appeared to be appropriate. It was anticipated that the findings of the study would indicate whether the assumptions embodied in the literature are accurate or whether perhaps part of the lack of success of inservice education might be attributable to the existence of a mismatch between how teachers perceive inservice education and how others assume teachers to perceive inservice education, assumptions which form the rationale for the activities offered.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON INSERVICE EDUCATION

In this chapter inservice education as represented in the literature will be reviewed. The intent of the review is to indicate the present state of the art in relation to the literature and research on inservice education in order to permit a comparison between teachers' perspectives on inservice education and those of others who write about inservice education but who function in the roles of researchers, writers or organizers, not of participants. Once the findings of the study have been presented the literature will be revisited in order to determine if the assumptions made about teacher inservice education are confirmed or if the literature is based on false premises.

First the purpose of and need for inservice education will be suggested. Next the various expressions that may be substituted for the term inservice education will be given and the types of activities that the term may embrace will be identified. Then the criteria and guidelines for effective inservice education will be presented. Finally current areas of concern and recommendations will be identified.

PURPOSE OF INSERVICE EDUCATION

The term inservice education has produced many definitions (Henderson, 1978:11) and refers to learning experiences which occur after the teacher has successfully completed a preservice course. According to the literature, effective inservice education is supposed to have a positive impact on the teacher's performance in the classroom (Freiberg, Buckley and Townsend, 1981:1), and the new ideas presented at an inservice education program must be adopted by the teacher if inservice education is to have an effect on the quality of education (MacDonald, 1976). Both these assumptions are open to question, although they form the rationale for the activities organized for teachers, and the criterion for determining the effectiveness of the activities.

As Kahn (1977:43) points out, however, despite the vast body of literature on inservice education, it is very difficult to find a definition of its aims. The goal of inservice education appears to be implicit in the definitions which tend either to concentrate on the range of activities rather than the ultimate goal, or to be stated so generally as to be open to interpretation, such as Roth's (1975:4):

> a process for extending or continuing the professional development of educators while they are employed full-time with a particular school district.

and Joyce's (1980:2):

> to build a long term, smooth flowing system which pulls the education profession to a particular kind of growth.

Implicit in many definitions is the assumption that inservice is something "done to teachers" (Tri-Partite Committee on Inservice Education, 1982:25):

> the intent of inservice education is to change the instructional practices or conditions by changing people (Harris and Bessent, 1969:17).

Such an assumption violates the known principles of adult learning and behavior, indicates a naive conception of the change process and presumes that all change is improvement. Indeed it is not uncommon for an author neither to define the term nor to identify its aims (Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982) thus leaving the literature open to a variety of interpretations depending on the assumptions of the reader.

Kahn (1977:43) suggests that the broad aim of inservice education should be to "enable teachers to monitor and shape their professional development" and he alone provides a list of objectives:

- to develop their professional competence, confidence and relevant knowledge;
- to evaluate their own work and attitudes in conjunction with their professional colleagues in other parts of the education service;
- to develop criteria which would help them to assess their own teaching roles in relation to a changed society for which the schools must equip their pupils;
- to advance their careers.

However, listing general goals or objectives is not tantamount to specifying criteria for the attainment of such goals. Thus as Cruickshank, Lorish and Thompson (1979) point out, although much is written on the topic of inservice education, there are not clear concepts nor a commonly accepted, precise definition; there does not even appear to be agreement as to what inservice education is. It is difficult to develop a theory base for an area when there is a lack of consensus on fundamentals, and where the fundamentals appear to represent the author's viewpoint or ideal rather than the outcome of a systematic research inquiry.

NEED FOR INSERVICE EDUCATION

Many professions have come to the realization that their members must individually and collectively accept the obligation to continue to learn and that programs to achieve this purpose must be established (Smith, Aker and Kidd, 1970:487; Kidd, 1973:208; Powell, 1974; Houle, 1975:63, 1980; Harrington, 1979; Frandson, 1980):

> Degree obsolescence is today's way of life. The "half-life" of knowledge in any given profession may now be as little as two to three years. The degree, in short, is today the beginning of the education of a professional (Frandson, 1980:61).

Indeed, according to Houle (1980), a zest for knowledge and lifelong learning are key traits that qualify an individual for membership in a profession.

In the field of education, the completion of preservice education has long been considered simply the entrance requirement to the profession of teaching (Corey, 1957; Stephens and Hartman, 1978; Bacon, 1980; Howsam, 1980), not an indication that the neophyte is a knowledgeable teacher able to function in the classroom without further learning experiences. It is generally acknowledged that there is no teacher preparation program in existence that can prepare a teacher for all the tasks that he is destined to face (Moburg, 1972; Powell, 1974; Bacon, 1980; Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982). As Moburg (1972:7) states, "regardless of the quality of preservice programs, such programs are inadequate and insufficient to maintain the teacher on the job." And Bacon (1980:1) agrees that:

> ... even the most excellent preservice program is only a preparation for entry into the profession, and cannot last a whole career because the context teachers work in changes.

The importance of the teacher in the educational process cannot be overemphasized. The findings of educational research in recent years have supported the common sense view that the teacher's influence is crucial in education, yet many teachers received their preservice education more than twenty years ago, may have been absent from schools for a long period of time, or may have received training of the kind that has little relevance to their present classroom assignment. Thus, although inservice activities have been offered since the end of the nineteenth century, the need for them appears to be even more pressing today, given the rapid rate of social, educational and technological change, the ever-expanding role being accorded to the school by society and the static if not declining teacher population which means that increasingly schools will be staffed with permanent and aging teachers thus losing the enthusiasm, flexibility and change that traditionally supposedly have accompanied an influx of new staff and the rotation of more experienced staff (Harris and Bessent, 1969:3,4; Powell, 1974; Cooper and Hunt, 1978; Bruce, 1980; Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982:385). Current professional practices soon become obsolete or relatively ineffective; new methods, techniques, tools and substantive knowledge itself require that teachers continue to learn throughout their professional career (Harris and Bessent, 1969:3,4).

Unfortunately, although inservice education has a long history, present practices appear to have many shortcomings and have not been met with enthusiasm by teachers. Interestingly, although teachers are considered to be less than happy with current inservice activities and to view the existing programs as less than adequate, the majority of teachers and administrators are believed to see inservice education as essential for improved school programs and practices (Harris and Bessent, 1969; Cruickshank, Kennedy and Myers, 1974; Zigarmi, Betz and Jensen, 1977; Ireland, 1979). Such pronouncements are based on conjecture or responses to questionnaires. No attempt has been made to conduct in-depth studies to ascertain teachers' perspectives on the topic. Too, when writing about the need for inservice education the term is equated with formal courses organized by others for teachers. It is not seriously considered that teachers may continue their professional education in a variety of ways.

TERMINOLOGY

The literature on inservice education is plagued by vague terminology. Several terms may be used to denote the learning experiences engaged in by teachers after completion of preservice education. Some writers appear to consider these terms to be synonyms and thus interchangeable whereas others accord a precise and quite distinct meaning to individual terms. The most common terms substituted for inservice education are staff development, professional development, continuing education and continuing professional education. In the course of an article such writers as King, Hayes and Newman (1977), Wilen and

Kindsvatter (1978), Drummond (1979), Smyth (1981), and Burrello and Orbaugh (1982) use several of these terms to refer to the one concept. On the other hand, Sergiovanni and Elliot (1975), Howsam (1976), Sergiovanni and Starratt (1979) and Lieberman and Miller (1979), do not consider the terms to be interchangeable.

At present, the term staff development is frequently substituted in the literature for the term inservice education. Some authors, like Lieberman and Miller (1979a) deliberately employ the term staff development and consciously reject the term inservice education or training because the term staff development:

> ... suggests a different approach to improvement, one that considers the effects of the whole school (the staff) on the individual (the teacher) and the necessity of long-term growth possibility (development). We reject the idea of giving courses and workshops to individual teachers in isolation from their peers and the school. We further reject the notion that teachers can be "taught" or "trained" to be better teachers by the mastery of mechanical behaviors outside of a context of theory and practice. We accept and explore further the fact that development means working with at least a portion of the staff over a period of time with the necessary supportive conditions (Lieberman and Miller, 1979a:ix).

Sergiovanni and Elliot (1975) and Sergiovanni and Starratt (1979) consider staff development to be growth oriented and obtained through job enrichment which is linked conceptually to motivation-hygiene theory whereas they consider inservice education to assume a deficiency in the teacher and to presuppose a set of appropriate ideas, skills and methods which need developing (Sergiovanni and Elliot, 1975:152; Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1979:291):

> We have observed that teacher growth over the years is less a function of polishing existing teaching skills or of

> keeping up with the latest teaching developments (these are the foci of typical inservice education programs) and more a function of the teacher's change as a person—of seeing himself, the school, the curriculum and students differently (Sergiovanni and Elliot, 1975:152).

Yet despite the precise distinction between inservice education programs and staff development, when Sergiovanni and Starratt (1979:292) list the characteristics of an effective staff development program and cite a research study in support, the source cited refers to the programs as inservice education programs.

Thus, although an author may indulge in the luxury of precisely defining specific terms and then building his article around his definitions, unfortunately the field of inservice education does not possess a universally accepted body of terminology. Nor is there any reason to assume that the definitions given to the terms by writers in any way represents the meaning attributed to the terms by teachers. Again, others are imposing their conception of inservice education upon teachers.

ACTIVITIES

Not only can the term inservice education be defined variously and several terms used interchangeably, but in addition a variety of activities may be included under the heading of inservice education.

Kahn is one of the few writers who systematically categorizes activities (1977:43,44). He divides activities into two broad groups, award bearing and non-award bearing, and the latter category is further subdivided into traditional and non-traditional. Traditional non-award bearing activities refer to those activities where the participants receive the benefits of instruction from an expert on the subject, mostly through lectures; non-traditional, non-award bearing inservice education includes all other learning activities and situations such as advice, curriculum development, resources, printed materials, exhibitions, workshops, working parties and social activities. Such a precise yet comprehensive categorization of inservice education activities is not common. It appears that most writers and researchers tend to restrict the term to planned activities such as workshops and seminars that have been arranged for teachers by others (Harris and Bessent, 1969; Saskatchewan Department of Education, 1973; Hendee, 1976; Zigarmi, Betz and Jensen, 1977; Larson, 1979; Tracey, 1979; Bacon, 1980; Boschee and Hein, 1980; Joyce and Showers, 1980; Wood and Thompson, 1980) and to disregard activities of a less formal nature often initiated by the teacher himself. For example, Johnson (1982) lists the typical components of the inservice program of a large school system: professional days in which the students are released from their studies and the teachers engage in planned activities such as listening to a visiting lecturer; workshops provided in school hours and after school hours; conferences; leaves of absence. Although he considers that curriculum writing projects and individual classroom visits by consultative and specialist staff provide developmental opportunities, he points out that they "are not generally recognized as part of the inservice program" (Johnson, 1982:36). Holdaway and Millikan (1980) found that the benefits of educational consultation for both the professional growth of teachers and the alleviation of their concerns appear to have been underestimated and the practice underutilised; the staff classification most frequently consulted by teachers at all grade levels was 'teacher colleague in same school.' Such informal, often spontaneous, activities tend not to be acknowledged as inservice education in the literature or in practice, even though, as Thelen (1971) notes, in the most useful inservice education:

> ... one finds intensity of personal involvement, immediate consequences for classroom practice, stimulation and ego support by meaningful associates in the situation and initiating by the teacher rather than outside (Thelen, 1971:72).

He considers that informal approaches are best able to meet these criteria.

Young (1980) is unusual in offering an eclectic definition that embraces a wide variety of learning experiences:

> Any activity that contributes to a sharing of ideas among teachers, an improvement in the professional and personal knowledge and skills of a teacher, or the installation of an innovation in a school's program (is included). Under this definition, inservice education activities could include a teacher, alone, reading, viewing a film or observing a second teacher; a group of teachers sharing successes and failures in the work of the day, or a team of teachers designing a new approach to instruction; attendance at a workshop focused on knowledge or skills, or attendance in a university class; a knot of teachers brainstorming ideas at a local tavern; a teacher out fishing and reflecting, while waiting for a bite, on classroom highlights, speculating about cause and effect; or a teacher and an observer discussing data gathered during an observation or a recent lesson (Young, 1980:1,2).

The literature, however, does not answer the question: What types of activities do teachers include under the heading of inservice education; do they agree with the limited variety of activities customarily organized for them, or, given the opportunity, would they include a much wider range of activities in an inservice education program?

CRITERIA FOR EFFECTIVE INSERVICE EDUCATION

Although an "improvement in teaching techniques (is) the prime measure of success in inservice education," (Boschee and Hein, 1980:427), and the literature supports the view that external criteria determine the success or failure of inservice education and the route to improvement (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Ireland, 1979; Larson, 1979; Tracey, 1979; Boschee and Hein, 1980; Young, 1980; Freiberg, Buckley and Townsend, 1981; Conran and Chase, 1982), as has been documented repeatedly, teachers may attend inservice activities but rarely do they apply the skills, knowledge or attitudes that were the focal point of the presentation (Rubin, 1971; Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Cooper and Hunt, 1978; Howey and Joyce, 1978; Houston and Freiberg, 1979; Larson, 1979; Brayne, 1980; Johnson, 1982). Based on this assumption, however, numerous attempts have been made to improve the effectiveness of inservice education, that is ensure that the maximum number of teachers attend organized activities and incorporate the skills, strategies, attitudes or knowledge presented into their repertoire of classroom behaviors. An extensive review of reseagch studies and literature in the area has identified criteria and guidelines which supposedly will assist organizers and encourage teachers to attend (King, Hayes and Newman, 1977; Zigarmi, Betz and Jensen, 1977; Chew and Schlawain, 1978; Howey and Joyce, 1978; Wilen and Kindsvatter, 1978; Ireland, 1979; Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1979; Joyce and Showers, 1980; Therrien, 1980; Young, 1980; Freiberg, Buckley and Townsend, 1981; Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982; Tri-Partite Committee on Inservice Education, 1982). According to the literature, effective inservice education:

-- Utilizes techniques that are consistent with fundamental principles of effective teaching and learning (i.e. needs-based content, field-based instruction, demonstrations, active learning, practice of skills and feedback).

-- Utilizes a systematic model of program development, implementation and evaluation.

-- Utilizes a collaborative decision-making process with a concept of parity among representatives of teachers and others who are involved with the inservice program.

-- Takes into account the needs of the student, teacher and school system, organizational context and support systems.

-- Provides extrinsic and intrinsic rewards.

-- Should be responsive to changing needs.

-- Should be accessible.

-- Requires that the general goals and specific objectives be clearly enough defined to provide direction and be compatible with the underlying philosophy of the district.

-- Requires that inservice education activities be held during the regular school day when possible, and when not, teachers should be financially compensated for their participation.

-- Requires that school districts allocate substantial funds for inservice education, sufficient to maintain comprehensive and continuous programs.

-- Should be evaluated over time. A particular inservice activity must be assessed immediately upon completion, based on objectives, and again later to determine the extent to which the objectives have been translated into teacher behaviors in the classroom.

Some writers have translated the foregoing into specific models or classification schemes (Mohan and Hull, 1972; Beck, 1978; Dawson, 1978; Drummond and Lawrence, 1978; Joyce and Showers, 1980; O'Connell, 1980).

The foregoing criteria and guidelines suggest an overly narrow, rational and simplistic approach to inservice education and imply that a cookbook approach will guarantee results, a promise that past events do not support. The criteria are based on assumptions that may not be correct: Are teachers indeed dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior; do they in reality attend organized activities in order to obtain information which they will use to effect an overt behavior change on their return to the classroom? The literature on inservice education does not appear to accord sufficient significance to the fact that teachers are adult learners, that educational change takes place in a socio-political context, and that the parties involved in any type of change do not necessarily act in rational and predictable ways. As Marker (1982:13) points out, change is more a learning process than a system-design problem.

INSERVICE EDUCATION AS AN ADULT LEARNING ACTIVITY

It is acknowledged in the literature that inservice education activities appear to have ignored the literature on the adult learner and adult learning (Zigarmi, Betz and Jensen, 1977; Arends, Hersh and Turner, 1978; O'Connell, 1980, Verzaro, 1980; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Young, 1980), even though there is a large body of knowledge available on adult development and learning (Knowles, 1970, 1978; Kidd, 1973; Knox, 1977, 1979; Botwinick, 1978; Whitbourne and Weinstock, 1979) and the psychological characteristics of the adult learner and the implications for adult learning activities have been documented (Staton, 1960; Miller, 1964; Bergevin, 1967; Knowles, 1968, 1970, 1978, 1979; Tough, 1968; National Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education, 1974; Wood and Thompson, 1980). Indeed some North American adult educators believe strongly that teaching adults is intrinsically different from teaching children and, following the lead of some of their European counterparts, employ the term 'andragogy' for adult education, to distinguish it from pedagogy. The chief proponent of andragogy in North America is Malcolm Knowles who states that andragogy is premised on at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners upon which traditional pedagogy is premised. These assumptions are that as a person matures (Knowles, 1970:39):

1. His self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards one of being a self-directed human being.
2. He accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.
3. His readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles.
4. His time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application and accordingly his orien-

> tation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness.

Knowles believes that a person's self-concept changes when he sees himself as an adult, a doer, a producer, and consequently adults tend to resist learning under conditions that are incongruent with their self-concept as autonomous individuals.

Not all educators support Knowles' distinction and considerable debate surrounds the andragogy versus pedagogy issue (Knowles, 1968, 1970, 1978, 1979; McKenzie, 1977, 1979; Carlson, 1979; Elias, 1979; Knudson, 1979, 1980). It may not be possible or desirable to delineate so precisely between the teaching of children and adults. Nevertheless, the majority of teacher inservice education activities employ a deficit approach and the banking concept of education (Freire, 1970:58) which violate the known principles of adult learning. Although growth and problem-centered rather than defect and solution-centered (Jackson, 1971; Kahn, 1977:43) modes of delivery may be used for inservice education, the latter approaches tend to be more frequently used than the former.

Unfortunately, most of the scholarly work carried out in the field of adult education has addressed the learning experiences of adults who are up-grading basic skills or are involved in non-vocational learning activities. The question of the continuing education of professionals, in particular of teachers, is not frequently addressed, other than general admonitions regarding the necessity of lifelong learning and continuing professional development. Membership in a profession, however, does not exempt the adult from the effects of aging on learning and behavior, although it is acknowledged that "the level of formal education is far more associated with learning ability than is age" (Rogers, 1971; Knox, 1977:464; Botwinick, 1978). But, it may be conjectured that the mandatory participation in continuing education required by many professions can cause interference in the learning process arising out of the individual professional's feelings of vulnerability and the possibility of damage to his self-concept:

> ... how adult students feel, their anxiety that they might be making themselves look foolish or that they might be exposing themselves to failure. This sort of anxiety is not confined to the unsophisticated who come to "recreational classes," nor is it confined to the unsophisticated and poorly educated. On the contrary, it seems to apply right across the range of adult students (Rogers, 1971:29).

In order to better understand adult learners, attempts have been made over the years to identify and classify their motives. Given that teachers, when participating in inservice education activities, are adult learners, it is posited that this body of literature may shed some insights into the attitude and behavior of teachers in relation to inservice education. Houle (1963:15,16) conducted the seminal work in the field and identified three motivational types: goal-oriented, activity-oriented, and learning-oriented. Boshier (Boshier, 1971; Morstain and Smart, 1974) developed the 'Education Participation Scale' in order to investigate Houle's conceptualization of motivational orientations and found that adults' motives for participation fell into the following categories: professional advancement; social welfare; escape/stimulation; social contact; cognitive interest; external expectations. Peterson et al. (1979) expanded Houle's typology to include the following orientations: a desire to achieve practical goals; a desire to achieve personal satisfaction and other inner-directed goals; a desire to gain new knowledge, including the desire to learn for its own sake; a desire to achieve formal education goals; a desire to socialize with others and escape from everyday routine; a desire to achieve societal goals. Grotelueschen, Kenny and Cervero (1981) investigated the motives of professionals and identified that they participated in continuing professional education for the following reasons: professional improvement and development; professional commitment; personal benefit and job security; professional service; collegial learning and interaction. Given that adult learners in general and professionals in particular identified that there was more than one reason for their participation in learning activities, it is unlikely that the assumption made in the literature about teachers, namely that they attend inservice activities in order to obtain information which they will use to improve their effectiveness in the classroom, accurately represents the motives of all teachers.

Not only has the literature on adult learning been largely ignored but in addition scant attention has been paid to research on the concerns of teachers and to the nature of professional learning. Fuller (1969) identified six developmental categories of concerns that teachers may have while interacting with their teaching environment: concerns about role; concerns about adequacy; concerns about being liked or liking; concerns about teaching; concerns about pupil needs; concerns about education improvement. She suggests a three phase developmental conceptualization of teachers' concerns: a pre-teaching phase--non-concern; an early teaching phase--concern with self; a late teaching phase--concern with pupils (Fuller, 1969). Hall and Loucks (1979) applied Fuller's stages of concern to the implementation stage of educational innovations. According to Hall and Loucks (1979:41), there are seven stages of concern, as the teacher moves through the progression from self, to task, to impact: awareness, informational, personal, management, consequence, collaboration and refocusing. Such information suggests that there is a need for different types and levels of activities to cater to the differing needs of teachers at various stages in their careers. At present in North America such an approach to inservice education programs does not appear to be widespread although there is some research to support the concept.

In Britain, clients for INSET (inservice education and training) are considered to fall into four major categories: beginners; pioneers; maintainers; settlers; and activities are planned to cater to the needs of each group (Bacon, 1980). Katz (1972) identified four developmental stages of growth for teachers of pre-schoolers: survival; consolidation; renewal; maturity; and suggested different types of activities for each stage of teacher career development. Howey and Joyce (1978) identified five different purposes served by continuing teacher education: job-embedded; job-related; general professional; career/credential; and personal. They recommend that there be different types of instructors for different types of activities and that different types of funding patterns are required. Such systematic, differential needs-based approaches to inservice education appear to be relatively uncommon. This study sought to determine if teachers desire different types and levels of activities at various stages in their careers.

According to the literature, conducting needs assessments appears to be the approach recommended in North America to ensure that the inservice activities offered are appropriate. A pivotal question relating to the use of needs assessments, however, concerns whether the inservice activities should be a response to the perceived needs of the teachers or the organizational goals as outlined by the school board and administrators. The traditional approach to inservice education reflects the belief that a school will benefit from the personal and professional actualization of its staff. Inservice activities are conducted on the premise that teachers should be free to select the personally most rewarding activities, yet such an approach may be dysfunctional for the school and it violates the recommended school system or school-focused and school-based staff development approach to inservice education (Schiffer, 1979:9). Assuming that it is possible to reconcile the needs of the individual with the needs of the school and the system, research in the area of needs assessments suggests that such an approach is ineffective, inappropriate, unsystematic, unreliable and superficial. Silver (1981) points out that needs assessments may be no more than a list of topics, selected by the planners and given to prospective participants to rate, so in reality, teachers are free only to select which activity, from a group of activities considered appropriate by the organizers, to attend. Marshall, Maschek and Caldwell (1982) found that individual needs change very rapidly, necessitating the frequent administration of needs assessments. A more serious indictment of needs assessments is reported by other researchers. Teachers often confuse their needs with their wants and there is a discrepancy between inservice needs reported by teachers and their needs as assessed by others (Ingersoll, 1976; Arends, Hersh and Turner, 1978; Jones and Hayes, 1980; Christensen and

Burke, 1982). Brayne (1980) suggests that a major factor inhibiting the transfer of inservice skills to the classroom relates to assumptions that inservice planners make regarding how teachers respond to needs assessments. It is erroneously assumed that teachers respond to the items on a needs assessment on the basis of a realistic evaluation of their willingness to change their present practices in the direction implied by the needs assessment, a strong conviction that personal improvement in a highly ranked need will lead to improved performance and more favourable attitudes in students, and a strong desire to acquire the new skill. Also, Arends, Hersh and Turner (1978) suggest that teachers responding to needs assessments often do as a representative of teachers as a group rather than as an individual self; teachers indicate the skills or knowledge they think should be acquired rather than the ones they feel they must acquire. Thus a response based on perceived needs does not necessarily indicate a readiness or commitment to acquire and use the new behavior.

The question is raised: In practice, are needs assessments used in the manner envisaged in the literature, or have they indeed degenerated into a ranking by the teacher of a group of pre-selected activities, or a request for topics for the next inservice sessions; and if the latter does occur, do teachers object, do they desire to participate in regular needs assessments of the type advocated in the literature?

Not only have attempts been made in recent years to identify and classify the motives and needs of adult learners, but also it has been recognized that the adult learner should be viewed in terms of longitudinal as well as horizontal dimensions; he is as much a product of his psychological future as of his earlier experiences and dimensions of both past and future should be employed in assessing the meaning of what he attempts to do in the present: "an adult is a human becoming, always in the process, always on his way from what he is now to what he might become" (McClusky, 1964:172; Allport, 1955). McClusky (1964, 1973) believes that a differential psychology of the adult years as a unique period in the lifespan of the individual has long been neglected; of particular relevance for understanding the adult are the concepts of margin (the power available to a person over and beyond that required to handle his load), commitment, time perception, critical periods and self-concept. The field of life-span developmental psychology which is concerned with the description and explication of ontogenetic behavioral changes from birth to death identifies the major developmental stages and transitions experienced by adults and suggests the major tasks of each stage (Havighurst, 1969, 1972; Erikson, 1950, 1978; Sheehy, 1974; Levinson, 1978; Whitbourne and Weinstock, 1979). Such information provides a meaningful insight into the dominant concerns of adults at various stages in their lives. Yet the literature does not suggest that organizers have taken such knowledge into consideration when planning inservice activities. Should such information affect the organization of inservice education, do teachers' perceptions of inservice education change over time?

Verduin, Miller and Greer (1977) believe that the perceptual theory of psychology has important implications for adult education:

> This theory suggests how an individual views his environment will have much to do with how he behaves. If a teacher wishes to change the behavior of an individual toward some desired new behavior he must modify the way the individual perceives his particular part of the world. Because of the significance of people's perceptions for

> behavior and learning, it is most important to give careful consideration to those things that determine or affect human perception. The identifiable perceptual determinants are beliefs, values, needs, attitudes, self-concept (Verduin, Miller and Greer, 1977:10).

Individual behavior is determined less by what a person really is than by what he believes he is, as a result of the consistent way in which others react towards him; thus to understand the individual it is necessary to know something about how he looks at himself:

> An adult who feels a sense of inadequacy, a lack of ability to learn or who sees no profit from the learning experience may set up defense mechanisms to protect his self-esteem by excuses for his lack of participation (London, 1964:121).

Rogers (1971:33,34) cites an illuminating example of educators exhibiting defensive behavior when exposed to mandatory inservice education. The fact that teachers are involved daily in organizing, controlling and facilitating the educational experiences of others does not automatically exempt them from the anxieties that plague many adult learners although others appear to assume that it does. Assuming that teachers, because they are professional educators, will attend learning activities with motives, needs, preconceptions, misconceptions and fears that are different from adult learners in general is untenable. Moffat (1963:60) is one of the few writers to point out that in order for the teacher to continue to develop professionally he must possess certain qualities: the desire to grow; readiness to participate; a sensitivity to the opinion of others; intelligence and knowledgeability; a willingness to discard unproductive habits of teaching; and, a desire to accept new challenges even though they require added effort and present some uncertainty. Inservice organizers appear to assume that all participants have the foregoing qualities. Do they?

As Howey and Joyce (1978:210) state, the perspective of the teacher towards his role in general and his function as a continuing learner in particular is critical. Witherall and Erickson (1978) and Candy (1981) believe that the underlying issue of teacher education is one of adult development and that the teacher's own development as an interpreter and constructor of classroom events has been overlooked. Inservice education activities should help teachers to develop a theoretical and reflective approach to their teaching. Rarely, however, is inservice education presented to the teacher as a natural and ongoing activity designed to help him become good at something very challenging. Lucas (1978) is one of the few writers to suggest that one of the goals of preservice teacher education should be to develop skills and attitudes that will enable teachers to continue their professional growth. Does the university deliberately foster the concept of a preservice-inservice continuum?

Traditionally inservice education has played a subordinate role to preservice education in educational priorities; the government and the university have financially accorded a higher priority to the initial training of teachers than to their follow-up training (Saskatchewan Department of Education, 1973). Recently the need for a continuum of training from preservice through inservice has been acknowledged (Stephens and Hartman, 1978:3; Gideonse, 1982:17). As Gideonse (1982:17) states:

> There is little point in developing a new and more expensive model for initial training in a profession as volatile

> as teaching without also considering the means of providing for the retention of such teachers or for their ongoing professional development.

In 1974, Powell (1974) prepared a prescriptive and descriptive paper on the role of the university in the continuing education of teachers and predicted that continuing teacher education may emerge as a major activity in institutions of higher education. Others today are supporting this prediction. Macdonald (1981:15) foresees the regular updating of professionals as one of the responsibilities of the university of the future and Spillane (1982:21) predicts that for the next decade or two the continuing education of teachers will be much more significant than the education of new teachers. In Europe the contraction of initial teacher education in universities is so severe that many education faculties are trying to offset this contraction by the expansion of inservice courses (Bruce, 1980:140). Unfortunately, as Clifford (1973:36) points out, prevailing styles of teacher preparation appear to have developed a survival training mentality among its participants and Howsam (1980:96) and Spillane (1982:21) agree that school system personnel often have a negative attitude towards teacher education. Wilen and Kindsvatter (1978) suggest that although the graduate degree program has been the most common means by which teachers have updated their knowledge and skills, the suspicion exists that such highly structured degree programs were developed as much for the convenience of the university as teacher needs. Unfortunately, the inservice program at school may be unrelated to the master's program at university and it is common to find neither of these to be related to the needs of the teacher in the classroom (Roth, 1975:5).

Universities appear to be endeavouring to play a more active and meaningful role in teacher inservice education. In an attempt to offer teachers meaningful inservice education in appropriate course formats, the University of Calgary has tried a variety of innovative approaches (Unruh, 1981); and a successful partnership model between a university and a school district that promises effective professional development for 200 teachers every 5 years is described by Hanes, Wangberg and Yoder (1982). The question must be asked, however: Do teachers wish the university to play a significant role in their inservice education, and if so, what type of role? There is always the danger that the university is basing its inservice education courses on what it assumes teachers need or want which may not agree with teachers' perception of the role of the university in inservice education.

INSERVICE EDUCATION AND THE CHANGE PROCESS

In the literature, inservice education is seen as a planned, goal-directed change process that has identifiable components, is introduced through deliberate intervention and is aimed at some altered future condition (Harris and Bessent, 1969:19; Moburg, 1972; Hall and Loucks, 1979; Ireland, 1979; Lieberman and Miller, 1979; Smyth, 1981). It is suggested that the low impact of research on teaching, the problems of curriculum innovation and implementation and the ineffectiveness of inservice education are but parts of the same problem (Ireland, 1979; Smyth, 1981).

At present the relative lack of attention given to the implementation phase is considered to account for the relative ineffectiveness of attempts to introduce change, be it of a minor or major nature, and the suggested solution is to pay greater attention to this phase of the change process (Elliott, 1976; Tri-Partite Committee on Inservice Education, 1982). Consequently, according to the literature, in vogue at present are staff development programs. How widespread such activities are in practice has yet to be determined; it is conjectured that many teachers may spend their entire careers in schools without once being involved in such a program. It is envisaged that if a total school or system-based inservice education program replaces the typical piecemeal, voluntary, individually selected and usually unfocused current program then the effectiveness of inservice education will be improved. The assumption is made that if it can be demonstrated to teachers that the desired change in behavior is in line with school needs or is obviously superior to present practices, they will "embrace it without reservation and assiduously set themselves to the task of acquiring the competencies to implement it" (Schiffer, 1979:6,7).

It is suggested, however, that this 'rational assumption' is flawed:

> (It) underestimates the degree to which individuals' values, self-interest, previous experiences, expectations, aspirations, needs, and personality traits influence their acceptance or rejection of an idea, as well as their ability to use it (Schiffer, 1979:7).

The assumption is made that people in schools are malleable, rational, share a social purpose at some lofty or abstract level and have a unitary set of goals; in fact, the values of professionals and semiprofessionals in schools have not been sufficiently consensual to allow change agent strategies ground in these assumptions to work (Mann, 1978; Prebble, 1978). Prebble (1978) suggests that it would be more appropriate to investigate the introduction of innovations when there is goal dissensus as in reality schools, as loosely coupled systems with multiple and conflicting goals, staffed by relatively autonomous individuals, do not lend themselves to the high level of coordination required to achieve significant systems change, which may account for the slow, failure-ridden process of educational change using the exclusively rational model. Everhart (1976) recommends the abandonment of analytical models for describing how schools attempt to put educational innovations into practice and the adoption of the view that innovation is an existential process of 'becoming.' Although the foregoing viewpoints represent a more realistic representation of educational innovation, it is still assumed that, basically, teachers are dissatisfied with their present behavior and want to change. Are they, and do they?

Unfortunately, the perspective of the individual teacher has been paid scant attention in the literature. Even if the teacher desires to change his behavior, many forces will constrain him (Kozuch, 1979; Joyce, 1976; Lieberman and Miller, 1979b). The life of the teacher is so complex that anything additional overloads him almost immediately unless his conditions of life are changed substantially; the dailiness of teaching and the tyranny of school life are sufficient to consume his daily energy quota (Joyce, 1976:16). Lieberman and Miller (1979b) identify the social realities of teaching: style is personalized; rewards are derived from students; teaching and learning links are uncertain; the knowledge base is weak; teaching is an art; goals are vague; control norms are necessary; professional support is lacking; the work life of the teacher is governed by rhythms, rules, interactions and feelings of daily school life. They suggest that these social realities, in particular the fact that rewards come from children, not from sharing, discussing and reflecting on the nature of the work help explain "why teachers become wary of new schemes, innovations, new packages, or even honest exhortations to do things differently" (Lieberman and Miller, 1979b:55). What are teachers' views on the need for and ease of the introduction of change into the classroom?

According to the literature, rejecting an innovation is considered to be an undesirable characteristic and adopting one is considered to be indicative of a growing person, a true professional. The Rand study (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1979) found that the more experienced teachers were less likely to change their practices as a result of project participation and this was considered to be the 'calcifying effect' of the way schools are managed and the way professional development activities are provided for staff (McLaughlin and Marsh, 1979:84). Is this an accurate interpretation of the research findings or are possibly inaccurate assumptions regarding teachers' reasons for attending inservice education activities and irrelevant criteria for assessing the effectiveness of such activities causing teachers to be negatively and unfairly labelled? Nicodemus (1977) considers that resistance to an innovation may be a highly desirable attitude for the majority of teachers as those rejecting were more knowledgeable about the new curriculum than were those adopting; innovators may have motives unrelated the objectives of the innovation.

Changes in education raise fundamental questions of values and power which reduce considerably the likelihood of change of any magnitude occurring (West, 1977; Drummond and Lawrence, 1978; Howey and Joyce, 1978; Mann, 1978; Campbell, 1979; Popkewitz, 1981). Research on adult socialization suggests that adults' values and commitments are stable and not very malleable (Schiffer, 1979:7). What teachers are doing represents their best professional and personal judgement and thus failure to stimulate change may be because they believe in what they are doing (Mann, 1978). And, as Goodlad (1982:19) reminds us, "we must never underestimate the extraordinary stability and resistance to change of pedagogical procedures." According to Mann (1978), the process of changing schools is a lot like the process of politics: all classrooms have a constitution; all innovations imply a profound transformation in the authority structure of the classroom; it is the teachers' professional autonomy that is being diminished, their personal and professional self-identity that is being questioned. Do teachers consciously reject an innovation because they believe their present practices are appropriate; or, is the introduction of change into schools just too difficult?

The system's principals have been identified as a critical force when introducing change (Drummond and Lawrence, 1978; Mann, 1978; Brayne, 1980). However, the principal is constrained by the realities of everyday school life (Mann, 1978): the public does not want to pay more; the students do not want to work harder; and, the teachers do not want to change what they are doing. No wonder, as Goodlad (1982:19) discovered, the improvement of teaching rarely is placed on a schoolwide agenda. But, although the literature may view the principal as the leader, in practice the collegial approach appears to be dominant and desired. Does the principal play an important role in in-school inservice education; indeed is in-school organized inservice education as common a phenomenon as the literature implies?

CURRENT SHORTCOMINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> Inservice education suffers from shifting needs, periods of "benign neglect," fads, and marginal resources. It is, at different times, emphasized and ignored ... Although we know a great deal about inservice education practices, this knowledge does not always inform our efforts. On the contrary, what we know is often compromised by a multitude of other factors that affect planning and delivery (Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982:385).

The persistent problems that plague inservice education have been identified in the literature (Rice, 1968; Kozuch, 1971; Rubin, 1971; Powell, 1974; Roth, 1975; McDonald, 1976; Kahn, 1977; Arends, Hersh and Turner, 1978; Howey and Joyce, 1978; Mann, 1978; Wilen and Kindsvatter, 1978; Cruickshank, Lorish and Thompson, 1979; Houston and Freiberg, 1979; Lieberman and Miller, 1979; Schiffer, 1979; Boschee and Hein, 1980; Brayne, 1980; Joyce and Showers, 1980; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Silver, 1981; Smyth, 1981; Burrello and Orbaugh, 1982; Conran and Chase, 1982; Johnson, 1982; Marker, 1982). The current areas of concern and recommendations as identified by the literature are summarized below.

In the past inservice education has suffered from the following shortcomings:

-- It has had a deficit not a developmental orientation; it must not merely make up for the shortcomings in preservice education, it must promote the professional growth of the teacher.

-- Inservice education has not had as a model a recognizable pattern of orderly and continuing development of professional teaching skills that it could use to develop a program.

-- Inservice education has not had an integrated plan and long-range goals; it has not been school or system-based and focused.

-- It has not been articulated with other resources, programs or community needs.

-- The roles of the university, the government, the school system, the professional association and the individual have not been clearly identified.

-- Too often inservice education has been shaped by outside mandates; others have decided on the content of programs, modes of providing activities, and even decisions as to whether inservice education is the appropriate solution to the problem or need.

-- Traditionally inservice education has been considered to be the responsibility of the individual teacher, and the individual has borne most of the cost.

-- There has been a lack of input from those purported to benefit.

-- It has not been conceptualized as a normal and integral part of teacher growth.

-- It has not been integrated with research findings.

-- Inservice education has been separated from the complexities and realities of the classroom. It has not dealt with the real problems of the work group.

-- The importance of the 'tyranny of the school day' when attempting to introduce change has been ignored.

-- It has not used the existing resources in the school or the system.

-- Most presentations are at an awareness level; there is little modeling, demonstration or coaching for application. There is no assistance in applying the new behavior in the classroom, nor feedback regarding classroom performance.

-- Little attention is given to the appropriateness of the presenter and his approach.

-- Scant attention has been given to the process of adult learning.

-- Inservice education activities are not evaluated systematically or formally. If there is an evaluation it is usually in the form of an opinionnaire completed by the participants. Such subjective evaluations are of little value as teachers are influenced by many unrelated factors.

The foregoing shortcomings were identified in the literature. What is not known is whether teachers, those for whom inservice education activities are organized, consider these to be areas of weakness, or whether, from the perspective of the participant, other, different areas of concern would be identified. It is possible that the listed shortcomings are weaknesses only from an organizer's point of view, but may not be the most serious areas of concern from the viewpoint of the participants.

In order to improve the effectiveness of inservice education, the following recommendations have appeared in the literature:

- Inservice education should be seen as a social investment providing developmental capital that will increase faculty contributions and productivity over time.
- Inservice education should not be viewed as a personal obligation but should be viewed as an organizational innovation that shifts the burden of growth from the individual teacher to the professional group and institution. However, it is recognized that the value of an innovation is directly related to the individual; to be of value to the individual it must be relevant, applicable and experiential.
- To be effective, inservice education must have support at school, district, provincial, and professional association levels; the cooperation of the school principal is seen as essential.
- To be acceptable to teachers, it must be demonstrated that student-teacher contact time lost will be offset by an increase in student skills and knowledge, and that inservice education will have a positive effect on staff performance.
- It must be conceptualized as a normal and integral part of teacher growth and incorporated into the day-to-day functioning of schools.
- There must be continuous, comprehensive programs that are compatible and support the professional goals or requirements of teachers; programs should be school based and focused.

- The scope of the programs should be as broad as the professional needs of the teachers.
- It must be recognized that the professional development needs of experienced teachers are different from those of new teachers.
- Creative alternatives should be offered to teachers; the traditional focus has been on instructional competence, using lecture presentation.

From the foregoing it would appear that what Moffat (1963) wrote almost twenty years ago is relevant today:

> Social scientists have repeatedly asserted that the success of inservice programs largely depends upon the degree to which teachers themselves identify their problems. The recognition of one's inability or of the need for change in order to grow, dissatisfaction with one's behavior in teaching, or a more determined effort to improve the school system are more successful in motivating productive teacher action than are orders to do or not to do (57).
>
> (thus) ... Only under those circumstances in which teachers find their own problems and want to do something about them can effective inservice education programs exist (59) ... The faculty of the entire school system should actively participate in revising the philosophy of the school and the objectives of education. If teachers do not know the objectives of the school they will not know where they are going or how to get there (59).
>
> The best unit of organization of inservice education for most problems appears to be the individual school faculty (Moffat, 1963:61).

Writers are advocating essentially the same approach to inservice today, calling its staff development (Lieberman and Miller, 1979; Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1979) and suggesting that a school-based, school-focused inservice education program is an effective way to introduce change into schools.

Do the foregoing recommendations accurately reflect teachers' wishes regarding inservice education? Can inservice education be so neatly delineated, categorized, wrapped and delivered; and if so, why the over-abundance of literature yet paucity of acknowledged effective learning experiences?

CONCLUSION

It is probable that much of the literature on inservice education is full of platitudes, half-truths, assumptions, common sense wisdom and false premises. The literature appears to view inservice education as a rational, linear process that is part of the change process and to assume that teachers attend inservice activities with the specific intent of improving their professional competence by changing their classroom behavior in the ways suggested. It presupposes that a change in behavior is desired, required and beneficial, and it assumes that if the teacher does not change his behavior upon returning to the classroom the activity was unsuccessful and the formula used needs to be altered. The key to success is identified as finding a new and motivating model for the delivery of inservice education. Thus the symptom appears to be treated as the disease. The literature is replete with lists of criteria, guidelines, models, shortcomings and recommendations, all of which, it is posited, reflect the assumptions of the writers, which may not necessarily be consistent with the viewpoint of the participants. It does not appear to have been seriously considered that the teacher may not have attended the activity with the intent of changing his behavior, or that after attending the activity the teacher may consciously choose not to change his present classroom behavior. Nor does the literature consider that teachers may have different criteria from writers and organizers for determining the effectiveness of inservice activities.

The literature, although acknowledging that inservice activities may be of both a formal and informal nature, tends to ignore activities of a non-formal nature and concentrate on formal, organized activities of the workshop or lecture type which have as their goal a particular overt behavior change which can be easily identified and used to evaluate the success of the activity. The literature deals disparagingly with 'one-shot' activities, particularly those at an awareness level yet such activities are attended regularly by teachers and it is postulated may satisfy certain needs. In addition, no mention is made of activities of a motivational or personal development nature, although at present such activities are featured regularly in many inservice programs. In the literature inservice education tends to be considered as part of a large-scale innovation project or formal staff development program although it is possible that the majority of teachers may never be involved in such projects. Too, the literature appears to assume that there is a pool of effective, trained presenters and that participants are consistently exposed to worthwhile learning experiences. Research findings relating to adult learning and development, the motives of adult learners, the concerns of teachers and the nature of professional learning appear to have had little influence on inservice education. It is suggested that such knowledge can make a worthwhile contribution towards a greater understanding of teachers' beliefs and activities in the area of inservice education.

The review of the literature has presented a summary of the current research and writings in the area of inservice education and has endeavoured to point out the possibly inaccurate assumptions that form the rationale for teacher inservice education. The intent of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education in order to ascertain if the beliefs and activities of those who participate in inservice education substantiate the literature or if the literature on inservice education is premised on incorrect assumptions.

The literature acknowledges that much of inservice education fails to meet the expectations of both participants and organizers and it was conjectured that there may be a mismatch between the goals of those organizing and those attending the activities. It was further posited that if such a goal mismatch occurs it may help to explain the fairly common and consistent lack of satisfaction with inservice education from the viewpoint of both organizers and participants. Once the findings of the study have been reported the literature will be revisited to determine if it is consistent with teachers' perspectives or if it is indeed based on inaccurate assumptions. Because the nature of teachers' perspectives had not been determined, the researcher adopted a research stance which permitted her to determine how teachers perceive the world of inservice education and which avoided imposing on teachers the preconceptions of others in relation to teacher inservice education.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education. In this chapter, the appropriateness of the methodology will be argued and the data collection and analysis procedures will be presented.

Although there is a vast array of articles and texts on the topic of inservice education, the field lacks a formal, systematic research base and thus "until inservice teacher education is examined more closely, we can only talk about what we think we know" (Cruickshank, Lorish and Thompson, 1979:31). In particular "inservice education research has given little attention to descriptive studies" (Cruickshank, Lorish and Thompson, 1979:31).

Given that there is a lack of research in the area and that a fully-formulated theory has not been developed, an inductive approach in which the researcher enters the field with an area of interest, some general questions to be answered, but no more, was adopted. It was anticipated that a descriptive and interpretive study employing qualitative research strategies would shed light on one aspect of inservice education, namely teachers' beliefs and activities. Glaser and Strauss (1965a; 1966; 1967; Glaser, 1978) describe a careful method by which social scientists can ground their research and theory in the reality they are studying. Their approach allows "important concepts, basic categories and significant hypotheses" (Glaser and Strauss, 1966:57) to emerge and avoids the danger that the data may be forced to fit predetermined categories. This general strategy has guided the present study. The views of teachers were obtained using the field research techniques of in-depth interviewing and participant observation.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As Rist (1979:18) points out, "the decision on the style of research one chooses to employ should be a matter of informed judgement, not of orthodoxy"; different problems require different types of investigations and the goals chosen largely determine the general methods used and thus the kinds of data produced (Quarter, 1975:47; Douglas, 1976:8). In order to answer the question posed in this study, namely 'What are teachers' perspectives on inservice education?', the concept of symbolic interactionism was considered to be an appropriate one to guide the research. Symbolic interactionism, which has come to be a label for a relatively distinct approach to the study of human group life and human conduct, has its roots in the rationalism of Locke and emerged out of the works of, among others, Dewey and Mead, Mead being considered its chief architect. It was given its name by Blumer who is considered to be the foremost exponent of this perspective although many distinguished philosophers and sociologists are included in its list of adherents (Blumer, 1969; Manis and Meltzer, 1972).

Although there are widely different interpretations of the symbolic interactionist viewpoint and its implications, it emphasizes the constructed, emergent and open-ended nature of experience, persons and social life (Lofland, 1976:319; Lindesmith, Strauss and Denzin, 1977:31). According to symbolic interactionists, a situation has meaning only through an individual's interpretation and definition of it. Actions in turn stem from this meaning; thus the process of interpretation acts as the intermediary between any predisposition to act and the action itself. It assumes that human societies are negotiated, emergent productions and that human beings have the capability to engage in self-directed linguistically grounded reflections and that this reflective ability enables people to enter into the organization of their own lines of action. Once joined, these individual lines form interactional patterns and it is these patterns which must be understood if the character and makeup of social structure is to be understood (Denzin, 1978:1). Thus:

> While people may act within the framework of an organization, it is the interpretation and not the organization which determines action. Social roles, norms, values and goals may set conditions and consequences for action but do not determine what a person will do (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975:15).

Symbolic interactionists base their philosophy of science upon the principle of subjectivism which argues that "one _must_ become closely involved with those persons, situations, and social groups for which one's theory is intended to account" (Denzin, 1978:3). Without such an involvement, a distorted account will be presented.

> Symbolic interactionism is a down-to-earth approach to the scientific study of human group life and human conduct. Its

> empirical world is the natural world of such group life and conduct. It lodges its problems in this natural world, conducts its studies in it, and derives its interpretations from such naturalistic studies (Blumer, 1969:47).

Consequently, although there is nothing inherent in this perspective that commits its practitioners to one method, or body, or type of data over another (Lindesmith, Strauss and Denzin, 1977:31), symbolic interactionists have emphasized the use of the naturalistic method of inquiry. The fundamental goal of this method is:

> ... to develop theories which explain the feelings, emotions, definitions, attitudes, and actual behaviors of those observed ... Central to such a method are ... participant observation, unobtrusive methods, historical-comparative techniques, interviews, grounded theory constructions, and triangulation (the combination of research methods) (Denzin, 1978:1,2).

In this study, given the nature of the question to be answered: "What are the beliefs and activities of teachers as they relate to inservice education?", the symbolic interactionist perspective and the naturalistic method of inquiry were considered to be appropriate and were adopted in order to permit the researcher to become "acquainted with the perspective of those he is studying" (Wilson, 1977:261).

Field Research Strategies

Often the terms naturalistic or qualitative research methods and field research are used interchangeably to refer to "all forms of study of society in natural situations by means of natural (relatively uncontrolled) social interaction" (Douglas, 1976:16).

> Qualitative methodology refers to those research strategies, such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing, total participation in the activity being

> investigated, field work, etc., which allow the researcher to obtain first-hand knowledge about the empirical social world in question. Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to "get close to the data," thereby developing the analytical, conceptual, and categorical components of explanation from the data itself (Filstead, 1970:6).

Although some literature might lead the reader to suppose that this is a relatively new research technique, in fact field research has a long history in anthropology, since the 1800's, and in sociology since the early 1900's (Bruyn, 1966:9; Johnson, 1975:x). According to Habenstein (1970:3), field research consists primarily in finding certain kinds of people and getting them to reveal the things that our concepts, hunches and sensitivities as practitioners of social research direct us to look for:

> Seen programmatically, field methods deliver data to concepts and techniques are consequently grounded in the heuristic value such data display. Theory, it would follow, is grounded in the return trip, with concepts validated by the efficacy with which they apprehend and give meaning to the data of field technique (Habenstein, 1970:6).

McCall and Simmons (1969:i) state that field research is the least systematized and codified of all the research methods employed to study social organizations for the following reasons:

1. It is not a single method but a characteristic style of research which makes use of a number of methods and techniques: observation, informant interviewing, document analysis, respondent interviewing and participation with self-analysis.
2. It is intentionally unstructured in its research design so as to maximize discovery and description rather than theory testing. Participant observers do not employ a priori standardization of

concepts, measures, samples and data but rather seek to discover and revise these as they learn more about the organization being studied.

3. The resulting data are typically qualitative rather than quantified scores readily amenable to standard statistical analysis.
4. It is a relatively expensive procedure as it demands months or years of active field involvement for the researcher.
5. The practical problems arising out of the researcher having to substantially live among the subjects of his study require considerable thought and human relations work.

In recent years the various strategies, processes and pitfalls associated with field research have been dealt with in various texts and articles (Junker, 1960; Cicourel, 1964; Dalton, 1964; Bruyn, 1966; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; McCall and Simmons, 1969; Dexter, 1970; Filstead, 1970; Habenstein, 1970; Wiseman and Aron, 1970; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Lutz and Ramsey, 1974; Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Lofland, 1976; Wilson, 1977; Glaser, 1978; Denzin, 1978; Miles, 1979; Spradley, 1979, 1980; Patton, 1980; Bodgan and Biklen, 1982). The foregoing references are of a prescriptive nature and outline how field research should be conducted. Johnson (1975:25), however, believes that "the accounts found in the traditional literature tend to be highly overformalized and overrationalized." Consequently, perhaps of even greater value to beginning field researchers are a small number of texts which suggest not only how field research should be carried out but also provide detailed descriptions of actual field research projects conducted by the authors and how the authors coped with problems that can and did emerge during field research (Riesman and

Watson, 1964; Hammond, 1967; Wax, 1971; Glazer, 1972; Johnson, 1975; Douglas, 1976; Reinharz, 1979).

The Qualitative Research Method in Education

Traditionally, research in the field of education has adopted the research methods associated with the natural or physical sciences, but in recent years there has been growing disenchantment with the processes and results of traditional educational research methods and an increasing interest in what, according to Spradley and McCurdy (1972) and Bodgan and Biklen (1982:19), are generally labelled ethnographic methods. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:27-30), who are concerned specifically with qualitative research in education, consider that qualitative research approaches, which desire to capture perspectives accurately, have some, but not necessarily all, of the following characteristics:

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.
4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.
5. 'Meaning' is of essential concern to the qualitative approach.

As West (1977:61) points out, such approaches "allow one to understand how conceptions held by people shape their behavior, at least in part, and how such conceptions and behavior change over time." Wax and Wax (1971:3) state that:

> From a comparative and historical perspective, the vast body of research literature on schools and education

> appears both pseudoempirical and pseudotheoretical ... the bulk of their efforts contrasts markedly with its quality and its impact because their vision has been constricted by an interlocking chain of assumptions ... thus instead of inquiring what sort of social processes are occurring in--and in relation to--the schools, researchers and critics have defined their problem as one of discovering how to make the schools teach their individual pupils more, better and faster.

Goodman et al. (1979:51) point out that educational research is "neck deep in questionnaires but observations of actual behavior are rare." Such information gathering techniques as questionnaires describe what men do, "not what they think about what they do, or why they do it" (Houle, 1963:8). However, as Haller (1979) suggests, it is not that questionnaires are somehow wrong, but rather that other ways of obtaining information are more useful, depending on the problem being investigated:

> Questionnaires are best suited to measuring attitudes, opinions, and values (when these are preconceived by the research), for collecting demographic information, and for garnering rather simple facts about a social system ... they are ill-suited, however, for ascertaining intentions--especially when, as often is the case, those intentions are not well formulated by the subject himself. If we wish to know people's reasons for acting in some way, other methodologies are usually more appropriate--interviewing or participant observation for example (Haller, 1979:49).

Willower (1980:11) believes that "the obvious strengths of qualitative methods lie in the production of new concepts, ideas, and hypotheses and in the immediate and holistic nature of the information presented" and advocates that there be more qualitative research carried out in the field of educational administration.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of research studies in education employing qualitative methodology and field research strategies (Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963; Jackson, 1968; Ryan, et al., 1971; Cusick, 1973, 1981; Wolcott, 1973; Cicourel, et al., 1974; Quarter, 1975; West, 1975; Elliott, 1976; Everhart, 1976; Janesick, 1977, 1981a, 1981c; Magoon, 1977; Smith, 1977; Kozuch, 1979; Friesen and Duignan, 1980; Ingvarson and Greenway, 1980; Clark and Florio, 1981; Sproull, 1981). Too, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of articles dealing with the use of field research techniques in educational settings and the problems that may arise (Biddle, 1967; Wolcott, 1971, 1975; Erickson, 1973, 1979; Lutz and Ramsey, 1974; Quarter, 1975; West, 1975, 1977; Fienberg, 1977; Magoon, 1977; Rist, 1979, 1980a, 1980b; Wilson, 1977; Smith, 1978, 1980; Stake, 1978; Miles, 1979; Clark, 1980; Hymes, 1980; Battersby, 1981; McCutcheon, 1981; Paddock and Packard, 1981).

None of the foregoing studies, however, has addressed the topic of teachers' perspectives on inservice education although the classroom perspective of an elementary teacher (Janesick, 1977) has been described.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE FOR THE STUDY

In an exploratory study such as this one of a relatively unresearched topic, namely that of teachers' perspectives on inservice education, where the researcher may be unaware not only of the responses but also of the questions to ask, a probing semi-structured approach to data collection was deemed to be appropriate. Consequently, in-depth interviewing became the major research strategy adopted and partipant observation a secondary technique. As Webb and

Webb (1968) and Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) point out, questionnaires are satisfactory when the researcher knows the answers desired but otherwise "fixed-choice questions with focused probes would presuppose the very knowledge we were seeking" (Cicourel and Kitsuse, 1963:150). Participant observation was not considered to be an appropriate major data gathering strategy as inservice education is not necessarily an on-going, overt, in-school activity that a researcher can observe by living in a school for a period of time. Participant observation, however, was considered a suitable technique to use when attending formal, organized inservice activities.

The In-Depth Interview

An interview is "a face to face verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of belief from another person or persons" (Maccoby and Maccoby, 1954:449). The interview is considered to be one of the major research techniques employed by the social scientist (Dexter, 1970; Wiseman and Aron, 1970; Denzin, 1978) for as Denzin (1978:89) states:

> In the ultimate analysis sociological theory rests upon the interview for it remains (and rightfully so) the basic source of sociological data. The interview may be complemented by other methods ... but it will never be replaced.

The purpose of interviewing, according to Patton (1980:196):

> ... is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind ... it is NOT to put things in someone's mind (for example the interviewer's preconceived categories for organizing the world) but rather to access the perspective of the person being interviewed. We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. The issue is not whether observational data is more desirable,

> valid, or meaningful than self-report data. The fact of the matter is that we cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions ... the purpose of interviewing then is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. The assumption is that the perspective is meaningful, knowledgeable and able to be made explicit.

There are a variety of forms of interview, from those that rest on highly structured formats to those that are open-ended and employ neither fixed questions nor a pre-determined order for asking questions (Paul, 1953; Merton, 1956; Richardson, Dohrenwend and Klein, 1965; Sanders, 1974; Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1980). When the latter format is adopted, the researcher has a sense of the information that is required and attempts to gather it; there is a fluid and constant interaction between hypotheses and questions and the researcher uses each respondent as a source and a test of emerging hypotheses. This strategy is compatible with the naturalistic approach.

In this study, an open-ended, semi-structured approach was employed in conjunction with in-depth elite and specialized interviewing as outlined by Dexter (1970). A semi-structured approach was adopted in order to place limits on the range of possible topics that could be addressed and thereby focus the interview. In elite and specialized interviewing as defined by Dexter (1970:5), the interviewee's definition of the situation is stressed; the interviewee is encouraged to structure his account of the situation; and the interviewee is permitted to introduce his notions of what he regards as relevant, instead of relying upon the investigator's notions of relevance. Wiseman and Aron (1970:27) state that the depth interview:

> ... enables the investigator to probe the intensity of an individual's feelings about a given social phenomenon, the intricacies of his definition of it, and how he relates it to other areas of his social life.

The researcher uses in-depth interviewing rather than observation techniques when he decides that the only way to know what is on the respondent's mind is to ask him and that to ignore this valid information source would be less than professional (Dexter, 1970:18; Wiseman and Aron, 1970:30,31).

According to Dexter (1970:13) the elite and specialized interview should be used when the following conditions exist:

> (a) alternative techniques have been seriously considered in terms of the research issue, (b) the research issues have tended to determine the selection of techniques, rather than the reverse and (c) inferences drawn from the interviews can be subjected to some sort of independent criticism, or preferably, vigorous test.

Dexter elaborates on the last point. He states that when the interviewer knows a great deal about the topic, he can make appropriate discounts of interview statements by reference to other sorts of data including 'common sense,' common knowledge and so forth. Thus different interviews, if selected with such a possibility in mind, can be used to check and correct one another (Dexter, 1970:14). He points out that most of the scholars who ostensibly rely upon interviews have a great deal of independent knowledge about the topic, and he warns that the researcher should not use this interview approach as the major data gathering strategy unless he has enough relevant background to make sense of the interview conversations (Dexter, 1970:17). When he was writing about congress he was living in Washington at the time and had extensive knowledge of and contact with congressional personnel and "all these factors made my analysis of interviews somewhat credible" (Dexter, 1970:14). In this study, the researcher is a teacher who is familiar with and knowledgeable about inservice activities, schools and educational systems.

According to Patton (1980:197), "the task of the interviewer is to make it possible for the person being interviewed to bring the interviewer into his world." The researcher carrying out an in-depth interview is faced with some fundamental problems: he must create and maintain a personal rapport which will enable him to obtain frank answers from the respondent; he must assure the respondent that his identity will be kept confidential and that the information is required for a legitimate study (Cicourel, 1964:75; Dexter, 1970:64; Wiseman and Aron, 1970:28). Although there are no universal rules concerning how to conduct an interview (Dexter, 1970:24), the following principles of interviewing generally are agreed upon (Caplow, 1956:167) and were adhered to by the researcher in this study:

1. The interviewer should not interject his own attitude or experience into conversations or express value judgements.
2. Because any sequence of questions structure the subject matter, the interview schedule should have the minimum number of questions in the simplest form adaptable to the problem.
3. The response which can be anticipated for the question is often quite different from the logical complement of the question.
4. All interview schedules and questions entail certain unpredictable effects.

5. The attitude of the interviewer towards the respondent should always be extremely attentive and concentrated.
6. The expert interviewer is much more than a recording device. He should pursue questions to the point where there are no ambiguities for him.

Patton (1980:195-263) devotes a chapter to the topic of qualitative interviewing in which valuable guidance is offered to those who wish to use this technique.

The particular interview format adopted in this study was a combination of the informal conversational interview which relies entirely upon the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction and the general interview guide approach which involves outlining a set of issues that are to be explored with each respondent before the interview begins, but the issues are not pursued in any particular order and the actual wording of the questions are not determined in advance when using this approach:

> The interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously and to establish a comfortable style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined (Patton, 1980:200).

Since inservice education activities are not necessarily obvious, and since what constitutes an inservice activity has been defined by others, not necessarily by teachers, in order to determine the perspectives of teachers it was considered necessary to conduct open-ended, informal, guided but not structured interviews with teachers. The topic of interest was known in advance but teachers were permitted to develop the topic and to share their views in whatever manner was suitable, comfortable and appropriate to the individual. The initial question was simply, "What are your views on inservice education?". The researcher did not have a typed interview guide in front of her as it was anticipated that this could result in teachers' rendering narrow responses to the questions listed. However the researcher did know all the areas of interest to which responses were desired and if a teacher did not spontaneously offer information on a particular point, then a more focused but neutral question was posed by the researcher. Thus the researcher ensured that during the course of the interview at least the following information was obtained: the individual's definition of the terms inservice education and professional development; his attitudes and beliefs regarding inservice education; the nature of his wants regarding inservice education; the benefits he expects to obtain from attending inservice education activities; the nature of his complaints relating to inservice education; in what ways, if any, other than attending organized inservice activities he considers professional growth can occur; if his inservice needs appear to change over time; his views on attendance at and timing of inservice activities; and what he considers to be the role of central or district office and the university in inservice education.

The researcher wished to determine the views of teachers, not their responses to predetermined categories. Consequently, open-ended, in-depth, elite and specialized interviewing appeared to be the appropriate strategy to employ to determine teachers perspectives on inservice education, a relatively untouched research area, as these perspectives cannot be readily observed.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was the secondary data gathering technique employed in the study. There are four possible participant observer roles (Junker, 1960:36; Denzin, 1970:189): complete participation, participant as observer, observer as participant, and complete observer. The researcher attended inservice activities in the capacity of observer as participant; she took part in inservice education activities but did not attempt to conceal the fact that she was conducting research in the area of inservice education. She observed the types of activities being offered, the behavior of the presenters and participants at the activities and she mingled with participants before and after the presentations. In addition, she approached both casually and formally teachers with whom she was acquainted to ascertain their views relating to the particular activity, constantly seeking confirmation or rejection of tentative hypotheses.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

Data Collection

Negotiating entry is the first step towards data collection and according to Wax (1971), Cicourel and Kitsuse (1974), Johnson (1975) and Douglas (1976), acceptance will be determined by how those in the research situation perceive the researcher, not his research topic, and interest may not result in cooperation. In this study, the researcher was warmly received by school personnel and was able to obtain a sufficient number of volunteers.

Permission was given by two school systems for the researcher to approach teachers and attend inservice activities. In order to enter a particular school, the researcher had to obtain the approval of the principal. Once the principal had agreed to cooperate, the researcher asked the principal to include a brief description of the study at the next staff meeting and to ask for volunteers. Following the staff meeting, forms (Appendix A) were distributed to teachers and those choosing to be interviewed returned the forms to the principal. A week later the researcher picked up the returned forms at the school office, or was given the names of volunteers over the telephone by the principal. The researcher then contacted each teacher individually and arranged an interview time. This was the procedure followed in all of the schools included in the study. The majority of the interviews were with individual teachers, and a few were group interviews. A total of 77 arranged interviews were conducted with 86 teachers; in addition the researcher had many brief, casual conversations on the topic with teachers while waiting in schools, while attending inservice activities, and on other occasions. Administrative personnel with a teaching certificate were also approached and several cooperated. During the 12 month data collection period the researcher attended 6 day-long inservice sessions.

The researcher used shorthand and longhand notes to record the views of the participating teachers. As soon as the interview was terminated and the researcher had left the school building she reread her notes, included additional comments, observations or reactions and transcribed any shorthand notes. Dexter (1970:60) disputes the belief that the tape recorder necessarily makes something more authentic or objective and Wiseman and Aron (1970:28) agree that although the tape recorder often is used, it is by no means necessary. In this research study, the researcher deliberately made the decision not to use the tape recorder but rather to record the comments of the teachers by hand. There were two reasons for this decision: it was anticipated and confirmed by teachers that they preferred not to have their views recorded on tape, and that using the tape recorder would have an inhibiting effect on the comments made at the interview; in addition, the researcher found that the teachers appeared to talk freely and at length when the researcher was absorbed in recording their comments. Being occupied by notetaking ensured that the researcher was not drawn into a conversation with the respondent. The researcher found that as long as she was busy taking notes, the teacher continued to talk, but often when she stopped notetaking and looked at the respondent, the respondent concluded the statement or attempted to obtain the researcher's views on inservice education. Although the researcher should and did contribute verbal and non-verbal indications of interest and the occasional neutral comment, for the most part she was busy taking notes which ensured her views did not colour the responses of the teachers. Wiseman and Aron (1970:28) found that respondents, far from being annoyed at the length of time taken to write down their comments, were flattered that the researcher wished to take down their comments accurately and in detail. Dexter (1970:57) believes that the researcher can exert some control over the interview by the method of notetaking. The experiences of the researcher in this study concur with the foregoing statements. However, the researcher believes that recording notes by hand would be difficult if the researcher could not use some form of shorthand.

Formal texts on field research normally do not mention the stresses that can accompany such strategies. A few writers candidly chronicle their own experiences and document feelings of inadequacy, self-doubts, exhaustion and physical complaints (Wax, 1971; Glazer, 1972; Johnson, 1975; Reinharz, 1979). The strain of conducting in-depth interviews is not as great as that which can accompany living in a community for an extended period of time as the interviewer returns home daily, and does not necessarily conduct an interview every day. Thus he has the required contact with 'outsiders' which is considered essential to protect his sanity and his role as a stranger (Whyte, 1955; Nash, 1963; Glazer, 1972). The field researcher must avoid over-identifying with those he is studying and ensure that empathy does not turn to sympathy (Geer, 1964; Glazer, 1972). Again, the in-depth interviewer finds it easier to avoid over-identifying with the subjects than does the full-time participant observer. In this study participant observation played a minor role and therefore the researcher did not experience feelings of alienation or undue sympathy. Although the interviews were arranged by the respondents, the researcher ensured that there was sufficient time between interviews if more than one was arranged for the same day, and that several days of interviewing were followed by a few days out of the field. However, the researcher did experience mental and some physical fatigue when interviews occurred too closely together for unavoidable reasons and this aspect of field research should not be ignored. It is a physically and emotionally demanding strategy and those considering this approach should be aware of its demands.

Data Analysis and Reporting

Schatzman and Strauss (1973:145) state that although field research does not require an operational design in the same sense as other research methods, it does require a set of strategies and implementing tactics to permit the collection and analysis of data. Over the years researchers employing qualitative techniques have addressed the problem of inference and proof by recommending procedures to be followed (Geer, 1964; Bruyn, 1966; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; McCall and Simmons, 1969; Denzin, 1970, 1978; Filstead, 1970; Lofland, 1971; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Cressey, 1974; Bogdan and Taylor, 1975; Wilson, 1977; Glaser, 1978; Miles, 1979; Patton, 1980; Adams, 1981; Guba, 1981; Janesick, 1981a, 1981c; Bodgan and Biklen, 1982).

The data collection, coding and analysis steps outlined in the literature and in this study have a linear quality but in reality they often occur simultaneously. Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocate that data collection, coding and analysis should be ongoing throughout the study as the information obtained points the direction for future sampling and determines the focus of future interview probes. In this study the researcher may have been negotiating entry in one school, conducting interviews in another, and analyzing the data collected at yet another school. Glaser (1978:58) believes that the researcher must collect, code and analyze the data himself; a coder can be hired for "pre-set coded type studies ... IT DOES NOT WORK WITH GROUNDED STUDIES" (capitals in original). The researcher in this study earnestly under-lines the foregoing statement. It is difficult to envision how the researcher can understand and make sense of the data unless it is collected and analyzed by the researcher himself. The words on paper are only a part of the data; what the researcher sees, hears and remembers enriches and gives meaning to the interview notes. The researcher's understanding of the situation permits him to interpret the data and reveal the patterns. Wax (1971) reports that when she was involved in a large study which necessitated the use of assistants she found that the data she gathered herself was far more meaningful and permitted her to understand the data collected by her assistants. She urges the research coordinator to collect as much data as possible, even though the project requires a team of researchers.

Those conducting exploratory descriptive and analytic studies for the first time tend to doubt their ability to develop labelled categories which fit the data closely. Assistance is given, however, by several authors (Spradley and McCurdy, 1972; Glaser, 1978; Spradley, 1979; Patton, 1980; Turner, 1981; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982).

In this study, the researcher adopted the general approach to inductive research as outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1965a, 1966, 1967) and the particular coding and category development tactics suggested by Turner (1981). In this approach the data collection process is guided by the principles of theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation and the constant comparative method. The researcher enters the field with a minimum of predetermined assumptions and a general question to be answered, namely, "What are teachers' perspectives on inservice education?". In the data collection phase the researcher jointly collects, codes and analyzes the data and decides what data next to collect and where to find it; evidence is collected from other comparative groups to check out whether the initial evidence is correct. Theoretical saturation is the criterion for judging when to stop sampling the different groups pertinent to a category, that is no additional data are being found whereby the researcher can develop the properties of the category. Thus data collection, coding and analysis is an ongoing affair, points the direction for future sampling and determines the focus of future interview probes.

Denzin (1970:301) considers theoretical sampling, in a loose sense, to be an example of data triangulation, that is the researcher explicitly searches for as many different data sources as possible. In this study, the data obtained from the first interviews indicated certain views that teachers had relating to inservice education and suggested tentative hypotheses to be explored in future interviews. The first group of interviews were conducted with high school teachers and after coding and analyzing the responses the researcher decided to interview teachers at other grade levels to ascertain if their views were similar or dissimilar. The views of teachers in promoted positions were sought to determine if they varied from those of classroom teachers. Also an effort was made to interview teachers highly receptive to organized inservice activities as well as those with less enthusiasm for such activities. Thus data were collected from teachers in elementary, junior high and senior high schools, and from administrators. Both male and female teachers with a variety of subject area specialities and at various stages in their careers were included in the sample.

The researcher also sought to determine if those teachers choosing not to volunteer to participate in the study were radically different from those volunteering; the consensus appears to be that there was no discernible difference but rather that those choosing not to cooperate had reasons such as lack of time and so forth. They did not appear to constitute a distinct group the omission of which could radically alter the findings of the study.

The data collected were coded following the procedure outlined by Turner (1981) and taking into consideration the suggestions of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978), Schatzman and Strauss (1973) and Bogdan and Biklen (1982). First, each interview was numbered. Then each sentence in each interview was coded by placing the sentence or a summary of it on a card, with the interview number. Categories emerged from the coding; a new category was generated whenever a comment did not appear to fit under an existing category (Appendix B). At the end of the data collection and analysis phase all the comments made by teachers were included under at least one category. Then the categories were arranged so as to give some semblance of order to the information gathered (Appendix C). Finally, the data within each category were reviewed and several categories were merged to avoid overlapping. Upon completion of the merging, 12 categories indicating teachers' perspectives on inservice education remained (Appendix D). These categories were then rearranged to portray the elements of a perspective as defined by Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss (1961:436) (Appendix E). The responses in each category were then typed on sheets of paper, each statement accompanied by its interview number, so that the researcher could quickly read all the comments and so look for emerging patterns. The observations made by the researcher while functioning as a participant observer, and any other observations and reactions were read in conjunction with the coded and analyzed interview data. Thus from the 12 categories that emerged from the data, patterns that reflected teachers' perspectives on inservice education were revealed.

It became clear fairly early in the data collection phase that there was great consistency in teachers' views relating to inservice education and professional development. Although most of the interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis with the researcher in a private area, teachers of all ages and grades employed similar terminology to express relatively constant perspectives on various aspects of inservice education. Theoretical sampling and the constant comparative method had determined what data to collect next and where to find it. Ongoing data analysis permitted the identification of categories and the construction of hypotheses as they were suggested by the data and enabled support for the tentative categories and hypotheses to be sought. Theoretical saturation determined when to conclude the data collection phase and leave the field. After being in the field for 12 months, the researcher had conducted 77 arranged, in-depth interviews with 86 teachers and had attended 4 days of conventions and 2 professional development days organized for the teachers included in the study. In addition, she had talked informally with many other teachers and had interviewed those responsible for organizing inservice education activities for the teachers included in the study. By this time, no new information was being obtained and the tentative hypotheses generated by the data collected had been confirmed many times.

The researcher employing field research strategies must always keep in mind the warning given by Wax (1978:260):

> ... every time I have been in the field and become truly involved I have had to struggle with an impulse to stay longer than I should have stayed. By this I mean I felt an almost irresistible urge to gather more data rather than face the grim task of organizing and reporting on the data I had.

Junker (1960:12) suggests a broad rule-of-thumb for timing the four stages of field work: observing, one-sixth; recording, one-third; analyzing, one-third; and reporting, one-sixth, of the total time. When data collection, coding and analysis occur simultaneously it is difficult for the researcher to estimate exactly how much time has been spent on each stage. Wax (1978:260) recommends spending as much time in report writing as that spent in the field; but as data collection, analysis and preliminary report writing can occur simultaneously, it is difficult to specify when one phase ends and another begins, rather they are overlapping activities. In this study, the data collection phase spanned 12 months; coding and some data analysis and report writing were carried out during the data collection phase and the remainder occurred once the researcher had left the field.

Glaser (1978:32) recommends leaving the review of the literature until the researcher has almost completed the data collection phase:

> This literature will always be there. It does not go away! And there will be plenty of time to integrate the literature with the emergent theory in the saturation stage.

The researcher in this study conducted a general review of the related literature before beginning the data collection phase. The value of the foregoing advice, however, was not realized until the literature was revisited after the researcher had left the field and was about to complete the analysis of the data and report the findings. Discrepancies between what the literature assumes to be the perspectives of teachers and the perspectives of teachers as revealed through the interviews could not be known to the researcher until the data had been collected and analyzed.

The final step in the research process is conveying the findings to the reader through the research report. Writing the report is inextricably tied to data analysis and the coding procedure used to analyze the data permits the reader to understand how sense was made of the data. The researcher followed the guidelines suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Schatzman and Strauss (1973), Bogdan and Taylor (1975), and Bogdan and Biklen (1982), and took into consideration the format employed in reports of qualitative research by Whyte (1955), Houle (1963), Glaser and Strauss (1965b, 1968, 1971), Janesick (1977, 1981a, 1981c), Reinharz (1979), Field (1980), and Clark and Florio (1981). Glaser and Strauss (1967:228) divide conveying the credibility of the findings to the reader into two sub-problems: getting the reader to understand the theoretical framework, and describing the data of the social world so vividly that the reader can almost see and hear its people. In order to accomplish the foregoing, Glaser and Strauss (1967:228) recommend that the researcher present the overall framework and the principal theoretical statements at the beginning or the end of the report, use a codified procedure for analyzing the data, and include illustrations. This format has been employed to present the findings of this study. Liberal use has been made of quotes from the field notes to illustrate the various concepts and patterns. Using direct quotes requires that the ethics of field research be considered. In a study such as this where the teachers volunteered to take part in the interviews on a predetermined topic, the question of whether the researcher must be dishonest to collect honest data (Glazer, 1972; Douglas, 1976; Reinharz, 1979) does not arise. However, the ethics and morality involved in the reporting of field research must always be considered (Junker, 1960:135-137; Lutz and Ramsey, 1974). In this study approximately one hundred teachers from eleven schools and two school systems talked to the researcher and steps have been taken to ensure that the anonymity of those being quoted is guaranteed.

VALIDITY, PROOF AND CONVEYING CREDIBILITY

Regardless of the time spent in the field and the amount of data collected, making sense of the data and conveying the findings in a credible manner is the fundamental objective of a research study. Scriven (1972) argues that a fundamental confusion exists concerning the terms objectivity and subjectivity and that quantitative methods are no more synonymous with what is assumed when the term 'objectivity' is used than are qualitative methods synonymous with the term 'subjectivity.' Rather the terms are used to refer to two quite different contrasts. The term subjective can refer to what concerns or occurs to the individual subject and his experiences, qualities and dispositions but it can also mean unreliable, biased or a matter of opinion. Similarly, the term objective can refer to what a number of subjects experience, or it can mean reliable, factual or confirmable. As Scriven (1972) advocates, this distinction should be recognized and it should be acknowledged that a subjective study which determines the perspectives of individuals can present the findings in an objective manner with reliable and factual data.

The purpose of qualitative research is to present a valid interpretation of the world as perceived by its inhabitants. As Patton (1980:327) points out, the perspective gained through careful qualitative analysis is not arbitrary nor is it predetermined. The researcher who employs qualitative methods of data collection must collect and analyze his data and present his findings in a manner which convinces other scientists of their validity (Schwartz and Schwartz, 1955; Vidich, 1955; Becker, 1958; Bruyn, 1966). Validity refers to correspondence between the researcher, the data collected by the researcher, and the real world (Sanders, 1974:7). Bruyn (1966:255) states that in order to ensure validity of data, what the researcher says is reality in the minds of those he studies must be the same reality as that conceived by the subjects and he recommends that the following questions be used to judge the researcher's ability to interpret the subject meanings accurately (Bruyn, 1966:180-185,264):

1. Time: How long has the researcher participated in the setting?
2. Place: Where has he participated in the physical setting?
3. Circumstance: In what social groups and social roles has he participated?
4. Language: How well does he know the language?
5. Intimacy: In what private social arrangements does he participate?

6. Consensus: How does he confirm the meanings he finds existing in the culture?

Guba (1981:10,17-25) considers the four major concerns relating to the trustworthiness of qualitative research to be those of truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. In order to ensure that the findings are trustworthy, Guba (1981) recommends that the researcher builds safeguards into the study which will ensure that the findings are credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable. To ensure credibility, he recommends that there be prolonged engagements at the site, persistent observation, peer debriefing, triangulation and member checks. To ensure transferability, Guba recommends that the researcher conduct purposive or theoretical sampling which is intended to maximize the range of information uncovered. The nature of the sampling process is governed by emerging insights about what is relevant and important, and 'thick' description (Geertz, 1973) is collected which permits judgements to be made concerning the fit between this and other contexts. To ensure dependability, the researcher should employ triangulation and establish an audit trail which will permit the reader to examine the process whereby the data were collected, analyzed and interpreted. To ensure confirmability, the researcher should employ triangulation, that is collect data from a variety of sources using a variety of methods, and practice reflexivity, that is introspection.

Triangulation often is recommended as a means of ensuring that the findings are valid (Denzin, 1970, 1978; Trend, 1978; Jick, 1979; Patton, 1980; Lever, 1981). Although the generic definition of triangulation is "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (Denzin, 1970:297), Denzin (1970:301) points out that this is only one form of the strategy. Triangulation can involve varieties of data, investigators and theories, as well as methodologies (Denzin, 1970:301). Many research studies employ one or more types of triangulation (Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss, 1961; Dalton, 1964; Riesman and Watson, 1964; Glaser and Strauss, 1965b, 1968, 1971; Cicourel, et al., 1974; Douglas, 1976; Elliott, 1976; Everhart, 1976; West, 1977; Trend, 1978; Reinharz, 1979; Holdaway and Millikan, 1980; Clark and Florio, 1981; Cusick, 1981; Freiberg, Buckley and Townsend, 1981; Janesick, 1981a, 1981c; Lever, 1981; Sproull, 1981).

In order to ensure that the data collected in this study were a valid representation of the perspectives of teachers on inservice education, the researcher adhered to the foregoing recommendations made by Bruyn (1966), Guba (1981) and Denzin (1970) and took into consideration other recommendations made in the qualitative methodology literature. The researcher was in the field collecting data for a period of time which extended from May of one year to May of the following year. In-depth interviews were conducted with both male and female teachers and with teachers who had been promoted to administrative positions in elementary, junior high and senior high schools in two school systems and with district office personnel. The researcher also functioned as a participant observer at inservice activities held in both school and non-school locations. The interviewee determined the timing, location and duration of the interview. The interviews occurred in the interviewee's school, usually in an empty classroom or office. Strauss and Schatzman (1955) found that middle-class persons are able to define the role of the interviewer and interviewee and readily conform to the demands of the interview. No problems were anticipated or arose in the course of conducting the interviews. All the teachers were volunteers. The researcher is familiar with the language and cultural milieu of the respondents as she is a teacher. She is of the same social and socio-economic status as the respondents and is close enough in age to the majority of the respondents to assume that the interviewer and interviewee met as equals. A low level of intimacy was expected and attained because most of the information was obtained through organized interviews which lasted from approximately thirty minutes to three hours with one hour being the average time taken. Rapport was quickly established because the teachers were volunteers and knew the topic of the interview, and the researcher and teacher had a common interest and language in the field of education. Consensus was obtained by seeking confirmation of tentative hypotheses from subsequent interviews, from attending inservice activities and from conversations with others knowledgeable in the area. Both data and method triangulation were employed. Interviews were deliberately arranged with teachers at various levels, and stages in their teaching careers in order to maximize the range of information obtained and seek confirmation or rejection of tentative hypotheses. In order to ensure that 'thick description' was generated and that the researcher's personal reactions and observations were recorded, a journal was kept in which descriptions, observations and personal reactions were written down. The procedure for data collection, coding and analysis adopted was one which is recognized in the literature. The coding process and the data produced can be examined by others.

CHAPTER IV

A PORTRAYAL OF PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Much of the literature over the past two decades acknowledges that inservice education has been relatively ineffective as a vehicle for introducing educational reform into the classroom. The rationale for holding inservice education activities is to ensure that teachers continue their professional development beyond their preservice education. It is anticipated that by attending such organized activities teachers will change their classroom behavior as a result of being exposed to new knowledge, techniques and approaches and obtaining information to help them solve their classroom-related and subject-related areas of concern. Implicit in the literature is the belief that teachers are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior. The success of an inservice activity is equated with a change in teacher behavior as indicated by the teacher adoption rate. Because teacher attendance at inservice activities tends to be low and adoption rates even lower, teachers have been criticized as being less than professional and indifferent to the needs of their students. Rarely is it considered in the literature that teachers may attend inservice activities for reasons other than to adopt the ideas being presented, that teachers may have many valid reasons for non-adoption, or that teachers may wish to adopt but other constraining factors outside their control prevent them.

It was the intent of this study to approach the topic of inservice education from the viewpoint of the participant, not the organizer or presenter. When inservice education activities are approached from this perspective, it appears possible that teachers are being unjustly maligned. The gloomy picture painted in the literature represents but one interpretation, that of an outsider who infers that because teachers often are reluctant to attend organized activities, may be more enthusiastic about the luncheon than the presentations, and appear to be unaffected by the experience, they are not interested in, and are making no effort to continue their professional development.

An analysis of the data indicates that teachers share certain conceptions relating to inservice education. These shared conceptions reveal a discrepancy between how teachers perceive inservice education and how others assume teachers to perceive inservice education, assumptions which form the rationale for the types of inservice activities organized for teachers. Thus it appears that the field of inservice education is suffering from problems arising out of a gross goal mismatch.

In this chapter the perspectives of teachers as they relate to inservice education will be portrayed. The symbolic interactionists' usage of the term perspective has been adopted and the final arrangement of the categories (Appendix E) was suggested by Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss' (1961:436) analysis of a perspective which contains the following four elements: a definition of the situation in which the actors are involved, a statement of the goals they are trying to achieve, a set of ideas specifying what kinds of activities are expedient and proper, and a set of activities or practices congruent with them. For ease of reading, the pronoun he will be used throughout, except in direct quotes when the teacher's own words will be cited. Quotes by different teachers on the one topic will be separated by additional space. An attempt has been made to weave the information included in the various elements of a perspective into a meaningful portrayal of teachers' beliefs and activities relating to inservice education.

(a): A DEFINITION OF THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE ACTORS ARE INVOLVED

CATEGORY ONE: TEACHERS' DEFINITIONS

No clear-cut commonly accepted definition of the term inservice education emerged from the data analysis, a finding which is consistent with statements made in the literature. Throughout the course of the interviews the teachers talked about inservice activities, professional development days, teachers' conventions and their own professional development and used the various terms according to their own interpretation and understanding. The terms inservice or inservice education, and professional development or p.d. often were used interchangeably by teachers and particular activities may be called by either term in the bulletins issued to teachers.

To some teachers, it did not matter whether the term professional development or inservice education was used:

> You can use the terms interchangeably.

> I see professional development and inservice education as synonymous.
>
> Professional development and inservice education are the same thing but professional development sounds nicer.

One teacher who saw the terms as synonymous offered this definition:

> An activity where you can experience some kind of growth on a teaching level and that can take place at both the school level, on a district-wide basis or actually any other level really and I have no preference as long as there are some activities that give you the opportunity to do that.

Many teachers, however, considered the terms professional development and inservice education to have quite distinct meanings with inservice education being but a constituent of professional development:

> Professional development is a larger concept, what being a teacher is all about; inservice education is but a component of professional development.
>
> I see inservice as being professional development but professional development not having to be inservice.

Teachers used a variety of criteria to determine the types of activities they would include under each of the two headings:

Involving general versus specific goals:

> Professional development to me is a large term and inservice in one aspect of that. Professional development is the business of teachers--such as reading, taking part in any activity including informal conversations be it at the bar, at social events, dealing with students, anything, talking shop at a party (and this is a common complaint that teachers are always talking shop). I take p.d. as a very general event and the best example of professional development outside of organized activities is reading--ATA newspaper, magazines, research bulletins--so any area where you are collecting information relating to education. Whereas inservice involves more formal, specific kinds of presentations done through the university, ATA specialist councils, teachers' convention or

> at least some of the sessions, conferences, p.d. days, professional development activities within the school that may be held not on p.d. days but funded through the p.d. funds allocated by the school district. I think that the inservice kinds of activities break down into two areas: theoretical and inspirational kinds of speech making; and more practical down-to-earth types of activities relating to the classroom.
>
> To me an inservice program is set up with a specific goal, to solve or to treat a particular situation. For example, computer inservice would be designed to attack a specific area of computer education whether it is to operate a machine in a classroom, to look at programs or to evaluate software. Whereas a professional development activity is more general in terms of philosophy--it would be on discipline, the exceptional child--it is not task oriented.
>
> Inservice is curriculum oriented whereas professional development activities tend to be much broader, unrelated to curriculum, for example the stress workshop.
>
> Professional development is a broader more general term which encompasses all the activities that one undertakes to enhance one's professional practice; it may be even more general than professional practice, for example a history of philosophy course. Inservice is more specifically related to program needs, changes in curriculum. It is school-defined, related to the classroom. I think it is probably more practical oriented, less philosophical, personal development oriented.
>
> I see inservice as subject specific and it should be practical and directed at the teacher teaching a particular subject, grade level, or type of material. Professional development is more of a general personal development--things like discipline, stress, teaching styles, philosophy.
>
> Inservice is related to the course I am teaching, the specific things I am doing, it's some form of help. Professional development is almost anything that develops me as a professional person, it is not necessarily related to what I may be teaching at this particular time.
>
> Inservice you attend at your grade level and is about certain subjects; professional development is to develop you professionally in general, for example it's on stress, discipline.

Developing the program versus developing the person:

> Inservice is exploring a new curriculum such as physical

> education, health, social studies. I think of professional development as developing me as a person.
>
> Inservice is highly curriculum oriented, especially with changes in the curriculum and with the government zeroing in to what we are specifically teaching. Professional development--things not totally unrelated but completely different from curriculum--the stress workshop. Teacher-related items to help me cope with myself in and out of the classroom.
>
> I see inservice as a school-based, school sharing of ideas with other teachers, to benefit the students' classroom behavior. Professional development relates to wider activities for my own professional development not directly to benefit the students' classroom behavior. I don't want to feel guilty regarding students; however, I will not be with the students all the time, but I will be with me all the time.

According to a time frame:

> Inservice occurs in school time, professional development outside of school time.

According to level of involvement:

> I see inservice as a working session, we are not so passive in it, and it is done in school in small groups and is more beneficial. Whereas professional development is done in a large group, we are more passive and topics tend to be overworked.

Whether self-initiated or imposed:

> Inservice is like a command performance--you've got to go; professional development you do on your own, it's a follow-up.
>
> Professional development is a personal thing and it is left up to teachers to upgrade themselves. Inservice education is run by the school system or department of education as a kind of must thing that they must take advantage of.
>
> Inservice I see as something absolutely necessary, for example a change of program, not an elective. Professional development is something you personally feel you would like to pursue.

The lack of standard, commonly accepted definitions has repercussions. In both school systems there was some dispute between teachers and administrators as to the types of activities that teachers could legitimately participate in on professional development days and there was some disagreement as to what was considered to be the appropriate use of in-school professional development funds:

> I suggested putting together backpacks but I was outvoted. It was not considered to be an acceptable p.d. activity, yet it would have been of value (for students).
>
> Last year teachers suggested holding a workshop to make classroom materials, they were going to get subs. in, but then we sort of scrapped that as a p.d. activity (not appropriate use of funds). But they (teachers) still wanted it.
>
> The best activity (on p.d. days) is making up tests, but we are not allowed. It's hard to make up exams at other times ... program development is a valuable activity which takes time.
>
> We can't leave the school (on p.d. days) ... they worry about the lack of cars in the parking lot.

Perhaps there is a need for district office personnel to clarify their usage of the various terms so that teachers are aware of the specific goals and objectives of the various activities. It is suggested that the usage of the term 'professional,' with its glamorous connotations, may result in activities of a narrower and classroom-focused nature being considered inappropriate when in reality teachers would prefer to participate in such activities.

(b): A STATEMENT OF THE GOALS THEY ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE

CATEGORY TWO: ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The attitude of teachers towards their own professional development throughout their teaching career influences their perception of inservice education activities. Many considered their professional development to be inextricably linked to their functioning as a professional, and "a very personal thing":

> What being a teacher is all about.
>
> I am a professional responsible for my own professional development.
>
> Keeping up to date is my responsibility.
>
> A moral and professional obligation. A real necessity, an integral part of one's career, it's essential. I wouldn't consider anyone who refuses to be involved in professional development a professional.

To many, professional development was a broadening activity:

> Anything that keeps me developing, changing my ways, making me think.
>
> Doing things that normally would not be part of our ongoing affairs--to extend your mind.

It is considered to be a never-ending quest:

> If you are going to be a successful teacher, you must be growing all the time, and that is what professional development is. You can't remain stagnant, life is not so. You can't keep approaching things the same way as no two situations are alike.
>
> I am still looking for ways to reach grade one, how to be a better grade one teacher: how to teach them to read, write,

> compute, achieve success, feel good about themselves, about reading, and so forth.
>
> I want to be the best teacher I can; I am not interested in promotions, or courses with those goals in mind. I want inservices and p.d. which will help me keep on improving my performance in the classroom.

Several teachers cited taking a university course every year as a means of continuing their professional development. One considered that involvement in curriculum development was the best kind of professional development; another pilots every program he is asked to. Others watch French television, take sabbaticals, are involved in special programs, are active in sports, travel to Europe. They deliberately choose extra-curricular activities that will be of value professionally and will have some carry-over into the classroom:

> I think it is really important that teachers continue their education whether it is reading good literature, travel, whatever, the greatest crime is to be out of touch, that upsets me ... I think it is bad at the elementary level, we are becoming too much of a specialist, it ultimately affects the students. We should expand the minds of students, yet teachers are narrow. I heard a beautiful phrase at the conference for gifted children: sometimes the mind is expanded by a new idea and never goes back to the old dimensions.

One teacher wonders, "Why do some people always make an effort and others always shut the door?". However, teachers can become overworked and disillusioned:

> We are kept so busy with overloaded classes that higher things such as p.d. escape us; we don't have time to sit down and think about our own areas of lack (sic).
>
> You become pessimistic as the years roll by. A lot of your efforts, activities are wasted; you wonder what's the sense of remodelling your presentations or goals if it isn't going to have any effect.

(c) AND (d): A SET OF IDEAS SPECIFYING WHAT KINDS OF ACTIVITIES ARE EXPEDIENT AND PROPER; AND, A SET OF ACTIVITIES OR PRACTICES CONGRUENT WITH THEM

CATEGORY THREE: ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Although the literature on inservice education acknowledges that inservice education covers a variety of activities from organized lecture presentations and workshops to informal rap sessions with colleagues and individual activities such as reading, most of the research and literature on inservice education explicitly or implicitly defines inservice education as formal, organized activities of the lecture or workshop variety. Indeed, it could be asserted that to many educators the term inservice education conjures up the mental image of a group of teachers sitting in a classroom or meeting room listening to a lecture-type presentation. Often the group of teachers is a captive audience as attendance at the activity is within school hours and therefore mandatory. Usually the presenter has no prior intimate knowledge of the group and its concerns and will have no further contact with the group once the organized session is over.

Teachers, however, consider attending such organized activities to represent only one of the several ways in which they obtain information which affects their classroom behavior, and a minor, incidental way at that.

The analysis of the data reveals that teachers perceive inservice activities to fall into four distinct groups and their conception of what constitutes a worthwhile activity varies with each group of inservice activities. Their decision whether to attend or not, their reason for attending and their evaluation of the activity are determined by the particular activity in question. Lumping all types of inservice activities under the one generic term appears to have led to confusion and misunderstanding between writers, researchers or organizers and participants. Following are the four separate types of inservice education activities as perceived by teachers:

1. Mandatory, formal activities offered in conjunction with the introduction of a new program or a required curriculum change. Such activities usually are held during the regular school day and are attended by those who are currently teaching the subject or who will be responsible for that area in the future.
2. Other types of mandatory, formal inservice activities such as professional development days, teachers' conventions and sessions organized by the school or school system which normally are held during the regular school day. Usually these activities are of a 'one-of' nature and the teacher can choose from several concurrent sessions.
3. Formal activities of a voluntary nature, usually organized by the school, the school system, the specialist councils of the professional association, or the university, and frequently held in the evening, at the weekend or during school holidays.
4. Non-formal, usually self-initiated activities which can occur at any time and in any location, and generally involve an individual teacher or a small group of colleagues. Often these activities take place within the school building and during the school day and relate to current teaching assignments and problems.

Attitude of Teachers Towards Mandatory Formal Inservice Education Activities that Accompany a Compulsory Program Change

Teachers appear to perceive formal inservice activities which are organized as part of a required program change differently than they perceive other formal inservice activities. Their reasons for attending such activities are different from their reasons for attending other types of formal inservice activities because they know they will be required to implement the new program. In this type of inservice activity the goals of the teachers appear to be closer to the goals of the organizers and the goals assumed in the literature on inservice education, that is, teachers attend with at least the intent of adopting the information presented and so effecting a change their classroom behavior.

Several of the teachers interviewed during the course of the study were involved in formal inservice activities arranged in conjunction with the introduction of a new social studies curriculum and their comments reveal their positive attitude towards mandatory inservice activities which accompany compulsory program change.

> Mandatory inservice for new curriculum is quite different from professional development days and convention.
>
> If you are going to use a new curriculum, inservice is an issue, a big deal. Teachers know they are going to have to teach the curriculum and they had better go to the inservice. But if it's not directly related to your present teaching assignment, then inservice is a non-issue.

Such inservice activities are considered to be essential if the new program is to be correctly interpreted and implemented:

> I think it is extremely important for the interpretation of new programs such as social studies, computers, and there is a

> crying need for inservice. I guess the department of education has recognized this by making it mandatory that school systems offer inservice in social studies.
>
> In social studies the written prepared units will do the job of telling the teacher what to teach, the carefully detailed outlines, but the one-day inservice will bring it all together. You need both parts to be effective ... I think the new social studies will work because the inservice brings materials together and tells you what's wanted.

The presenter, materials and timing of the activity play a large part in determining its success:

> Social studies inservice is of tremendous value, it's an excellent idea, it lets teachers know they're not alone and should make the curriculum excellent, efficient. That's important when bringing out new curriculum in this district. There's an excellent resource person, and she has good rapport, and teachers appreciate the efficiency of the whole package. Two years ago it was a hodge podge but now the secondment of individuals has proven satisfactory, and the presenter is a large portion of the benefit and students directly benefit.
>
> Teachers initially had a negative attitude toward social studies inservice as junior high teachers thought here we go again, they had to prepare for subs. plus follow up work. But in this case the junior high social studies inservice was very well received, I don't know if it's the presenter's attitude but teachers so far have been appreciative and this seems to be what teachers want. They found out they were not alone, they got to review resource materials, they saw what's available.
>
> I think it is the best way right now we have to present a new curriculum because other methods have been tried. But it depends on the presenter, the lady here has done a super job but it could be presented in a dull way.
>
> The social studies inservice was excellent as it was geared to our grade level, it dealt with materials we are handling or could get.

In particular, teachers viewed favorably having students released from school when attending sessions:

> It's of benefit having no students on the day of the social studies inservice as then you don't have to prepare for subs., worry about the class clown, tie up all the loose ends on your return to school.
>
> I feel much better this year with a day off for social studies inservice, you're not looking at the clock after four p.m. If it's after school, you don't assimilate the information. It's the first time for a one-day inservice in school time, in depth, done by a teacher not a publisher, and it makes it worthwhile.
>
> Social studies is good and what we want. Now I know the government has an obligation if it puts out a new program, it should give information, but I don't want after-school obligations, I am too tired. At the social studies inservice in one full school day I learned a lot, I practised a lot in the classroom, and it gave me a broad overview of the new program.

Attitude of Teachers Towards Other Formal Inservice Education Activities

The attitude of teachers towards formal inservice education activities that do not accompany an enforced program change runs the gamut from insult to indifference to essential. A few teachers consider such activities to be an insult:

> Once a guy has professional certification, I find it an insult to the university and the guy to give inservice. It implies incompetence. If I am good, I don't need them; if I am not, they won't help me.

Reasons for teachers' low opinion of formal inservice activities were offered:

> It starts at university, teachers' low opinion of C.I. courses, philosophy courses and workshops are an extension of the same.
>
> I will find inservice insulting personally and professionally if it is on something I have done or am doing and I've not been consulted, my needs have not been recognized.
>
> I have a fairly negative view of professional development as a

> lot of what passes as p.d. is a lot of activity without necessarily being professional.
>
> Only go-aheads go to workshops and inservices.

Several teachers voiced their indifference to formal inservice activities:

> Teachers don't talk much about inservice. It's a growth area in the literature, a non-issue in schools.
>
> It's a necessary little evil, a day without kids.

A teacher who is on the professional development committee in his school noted that he found it difficult to get a reply when requesting suggestions for professional development days and was of the opinion that:

> As long as there's no kids and a lunch organized, then it doesn't matter (what's organized).

One pondered, "I wonder if I need inservice at all," and others said, "there's no point to inservice," "it's a topic not normally thought about." It was suggested that:

> Teachers don't talk about inservice or say blah, have negative views because they've been to ones that have done very little for them.

One teacher made a comment which could be used to place the negative and hostile comments into perspective:

> I think inservice is an issue with teachers but they are afraid to show they are vulnerable. If you come out and say "I have a problem," they will agree, but they won't voice it first. I think teachers are conservative and insecure.

However, the majority of teachers interviewed in the course of the study had a far more positive outlook:

> A non-issue? Teachers consider it a necessity, they do care about inservice. I've never been in a situation where teachers considered it to be a non-issue.
>
> In this school, we are talking about inservice all the time. It's a very active staff in terms of school involvement and p.d. and there's lots of talk relating to conferences attended, they come back with something specific of value to share. They will actually consciously tell you about it in the staffroom.
>
> Teachers here are really concerned, really into inservice, and talk about it afterwards, share with colleagues, have books to share ... teachers have a real genuine interest in inservice education to the extent that they will spend their own money, they'll take Saturday, evening workshops, belong to the IRA, they automatically take courses at university or somewhere else with carry over into school life.

Many teachers noted that the attitude the individual brings to formal inservice activities is very important:

> Attitude has a lot do do with the perceived value. What you take to it is what you get from it.
>
> Unless the participant is interested, ready, inservice is of no use. Not only those offering inservice have a responsibility.
>
> The individual must have goal direction. The attitude he brings to inservice is very important.
>
> It depends on the personality factor. Some are receptive to everything, some negative to everything, some always have time, some never.
>
> I feel that if you go into sessions with the right attitude you will get something of value and the kids will ultimately benefit.

Several teachers put forward the viewpont that attitude towards formal inservice activities varies according to whether the teacher is the only teacher of a subject in the school, or one of a group of several teachers who are responsible for a particular subject area:

> I see inservice in a different light now that I am the only teacher of a subject. As the only art teacher in school I have the problem of isolation; I can't meet with subject colleagues daily.
>
> I feel different about inservice as I am the only librarian in the school; before I was a classroom teacher and shared ideas with other teachers.

Several teachers felt that the benefits of inservice have to be weighed against the loss of teaching time and its effect on their students:

> I get guilt feeling when students are out of school, or have a substitute while you are attending inservice.
>
> Inservice is a waste of time and money--pulling people out of the classroom and depriving students of teaching time. You need more contact with kids.
>
> It's too much trouble to make up lesson plans for subs.
>
> I don't like preparing for subs. I want something taught exactly as I teach it.

They get particularly upset when they consider that they did not benefit from the session:

> You should leave inservice feeling excited and wanting to go back to the classroom and try it out yet the last inservice here I left and felt badly about the waste of time. I would rather have been teaching.

Yet even those teachers who considered formal inservice activities as presently organized to be of little value did not desire to have them discontinued, but rather wished that more appropriate activities were offered:

> Even though I am critical of p.d. activities I don't want to see them wiped out. It would be good if there were better ways of organizing inservice but unfortunately it's sort of a hit or miss, there are some irrelevant things, but the important thing is to keep on going to them even if some of the things are not relevant.
>
> Inservice is necessary and I don't really want them to take them (professional development days) away, but they do have to change them.

CATEGORY FOUR: TEACHERS' REASONS FOR ATTENDING FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT A PART OF A COMPULSORY PROGRAM CHANGE

Teachers indicated that they attend formal inservice education activities that do not accompany a compulsory program change in order to have certain needs satisfied, needs which they consider constitute legitimate, worthwhile reasons for holding such activities.

Not Necessarily to Change Behavior

Despite the assumptions of others, teachers do not expect to change their classroom behavior as a result of attending the activities, nor do they attend them with that intent in mind:

> I think I have that glorious idea at the back of my mind (to change my behavior) but I just appreciate the opportunity to get ideas. I think it is more of a recharging experience and if you believe what you hear you may change your behavior but I don't think honestly that that happens. From various experiences I may have modified my behavior, but I am still the same guy.
>
> I don't necessarily go and say "Hey, I am going to get new ideas for my classroom."
>
> I go for many reasons, but I think that to change my behavior is a kind of incidental reason.

> If changed behavior is the only criteria for success, then the rationale is wrong, it's too narrow, and besides which, you could not be expected in an inservice to change each teacher's behavior or method of doing something. You may change it, but every one is starting from a different point, with a different viewpoint.
>
> I think perhaps once in a long time (teachers change their classroom behavior), and I think perhaps the social studies ones are aimed at that and it will be interesting to see if they bring about change, but by and large I don't think professional development days and convention days are viewed that way. I think they are viewed as breaks in the routine--dabbling is the word that comes to mind--you might find out something that interests you or find more information about something, but I do not think it is very earth-shattering and I think it serves purposes other than education in that sense. I think given the reputation of conventions in general, that might be true in other professions--dentists aren't going to discuss molars.

It was suggested that teaching does not attract innovators:

> Part of the reason people get into teaching is that they are very conservative, rational people--if they were radical, they would not last, or like teaching. Occasionally there's some insight into something, some fad, like stress. You tend to go to inservice on, for example, dyslexia, listen, return to the classroom and pick up at the chalkboard where you left off, and make no attempt to use the information on learning/reading disabilities.
>
> Teachers tend to be insulated, indifferent, do their own thing regardless. They pay lip service only.

Indeed, even when teachers desire to change their behavior, such changes are difficult. A major change takes commitment, time and energy:

> Unless it's an area I don't know too much about I go for confirmation, not a conscious desire to change unless I feel shaky in the area. I wouldn't adopt right away unless I felt dissatisfied with my approach, I've not got the time.
>
> I've not got enough time and energy to change as a result of the presentation, therefore I don't change behavior as a result of going to an inservice, but the intent is there.

> Major changes are introduced slowly over time. It's too difficult in large areas as other people are involved, there's not enough information given, often the presentation is at too high a level to translate down to the classroom level.
>
> I know you can come away from inservices with ideas and they die, even though they are good ideas. A major change in school must be well-planned, well organized, a total commitment, to see any results. I'm afraid we don't get any real changes occurring because of that. There are so many other things for the teacher to do.

Any change has far reaching effects which can drastically reduce its chances of being adopted. Teachers consider that it is easier to bring about change if others in the school are knowledgeable and supportive:

> It's difficult to apply new ideas, concepts if other staff members are not interested.
>
> If someone on your staff has had experience, there's more chance of affecting the daily environment.
>
> Now others (schools) are envious as we can work together as a team whereas they sent only one (participant) and he will go back to school, the others on staff are unfamiliar with new idea and it will fizzle out.

It was suggested that changing behavior after an inservice which accompanies a compulsory program change is easier because the teacher does not have to convince others of the need to change:

> To adopt you must justify new ideas to bosses, colleagues, incorporate them into your present teaching methods. It's different with social studies inservices as curriculum is in use and you will be evaluated on it.
>
> I question if there is any carry over on these things, especially guest speakers, p.d. days, as after a couple of days the topic is forgotten. I think specialist council ATA inservices on new courses probably have more carry over into the classroom.

One teacher suggested that perhaps "we should be looking at small changes in individual teachers rather than large changes in the total picture."

Others felt that a more realistic goal might be that of acquainting teachers with possible behavior changes or refreshing their memories:

> To change behavior takes years, but inservice acquaints teachers, stimulates them and if they choose to follow up, that's their decision.
>
> The time is too short to change behavior, but although the long-term impact is uncertain, it is a beginning, it gets you thinking.
>
> I get ideas from speakers and encouragement, but I think it is a slow assimilation. I look at the problem and ways of solving it, I ask the guy next door and get ideas from colleagues.
>
> Inservice reminds you of something temporarily forgotten or never used, and you use it. It shakes you up a little.
>
> It may reinforce an idea you have been exposed to before.
>
> I think a half hour presentation done properly can affect you right down to the kids, for example the one on mastery learning. I don't know if it gave me information I did not have or reinforced information I have in my mind, but I don't know if that is bad, reinforcing something I already know.

Some felt that more than one exposure to a new topic was required:

> It may even take more than one inservice on a topic before you consider using it in the classroom, or it may take a particular type of person to get you interested. Or like the session on special education, you may use that information for a particular student in your classroom.

Teachers pointed out that even if they desire to adopt a new idea, they would wait until "next time around"; there are simply too many daily tasks that must be performed:

> I tend to not change behavior, partly because of lack of time, we're going around here with our heads off like chickens. I wouldn't adopt right away unless I was dissatisfied with what I am doing. I would adopt at the beginning of the next time I was teaching the unit. It's bad enough just getting through the day-to-day with 101 things to do so preplanning gets lost, I've not got two weeks to set up a new program.
>
> Even if you change because of inservice, you probably will not change that year or the next year, you might adopt a couple of ideas, a couple of years later--a few unusual people may go with the idea of adopting, changing the program, but changing a program is really hard, I try to (adopt new ideas) but it puts more pressure on you and I think I don't want more pressure. It's odd, whether you are a first year or a ten year teacher, none of us like the pressure and the pressure does not lessen. You are always constantly dealing with and adapting to the demands of students, that part no one can change for you, but they can help you to deal with it more effectively.

The organizers, however, "can only create conditions for change."

Change has to combat a human tendency:

> We believe what is relevant and what backs up our position; we don't remember or distort what is not acceptable to us.
>
> People come back more defensive.

As several teachers mentioned, those involved must feel the need to change:

> There must be some sort of dissatisfaction with what is, and if you go to a workshop and you feel dissatisfied, then you are tempted to change. I don't know if it is so much a matter of the logistics of it, the need for total staff involvement, having to change the existing environment, all the people who must be involved to bring about change after a workshop as more seeing no need for change, what is being done is fine, it works. You see a need to change and others don't. You need to establish that need in another, to change the person who has to help you. Unless you can create that need for change, it is very hard. The problem of inservice is that if you have to inservice people, it must be linked to a need, and you have to create that need for change and if it is not created the whole inservice is a waste of time.

> Even if an area of weakness is known (by superordinate) unless the teacher sees it as such, attending a workshop will be of little value.
>
> We wanted to change a couple of teachers in ------ school, make them more empathetic. We gave a session on discipline. The ones already empathetic became more so, felt positive, expanded, but the ones we wanted to change, it was like water off a duck's back--that was us imposing our view of their needs on them and they did not perceive it as a need and did not respond to the session. But the presentation benefited others. Makes me think you have to build on strengths, you end up with an even more developed, growing person, and perhaps he encompasses others as he grows.

In the final analysis:

> Whether you use, implement the idea depends on what it is, how it's presented and if you were interested in the first place.

Although the teachers interviewed in the course of the study indicated that they did not attend formal inservice education activities in order to obtain information that they would use to bring about an immediate change in their classroom behavior, they did indicate that they attended such activities in order to satisfy certain needs. Consequently, although such organized activities may be considered to be less than successful when judged by the criterion of an overt change in the classroom behavior of participants, such activities can be considered successful when judged by the various criteria used by teachers. Following are the reasons teachers gave for attending these activities.

To Associate with Adults

The need for contact with adults was mentioned frequently by teachers:

> I like kids ... but I need to escape to an adult level intellectually. For myself that is sharing, talking with other teachers. So I want a day away for inservice as I need that shot-in-the-arm, even if it (inservice activity) is too general to be of a practical value to me tomorrow in the classroom.
>
> Even if there are no practical ideas, it's a break from being at the level of children learning.
>
> It is important to keep in touch (with other teachers) and you really need the break. Conventions are essential as you need to see teachers in a relaxed atmosphere ... you need to see teachers as people. It all has some spin-off, direct or indirect, to the classroom.

Attending an activity provides an opportunity for teachers to meet with colleagues and exchange ideas:

> I think that getting out of the classroom and exchanging ideas is a good 50 per cent of the value (of formal inservice activities) and value enough. It broadens your horizons. You get very narrow in the classroom and the older we get the more fixed we get and if we don't get away from our fixed positions ...
>
> I go with an open mind, no teacher usually believes she is getting 100 per cent results and you go with the feeling that I can learn from another teacher, that's why I like small group with other teachers. Even if you feel you are handling it well, it gives you insights and I think that's the most important type of inservice where your own teaching always benefits.
>
> I see inservice as the perfect opportunity to talk with other teachers in the same field as you are. I see that as a significant benefit.
>
> It provides the opportunity to see others out of your own area.
>
> Keeping in touch with colleagues, finding out you have similar problems, is of value.
>
> You get the discussion of ideas during the car ride on the way to inservice and during lunch--without discussion you never know.
>
> Gives you a chance to talk about problems, it's a morale booster.

Both the individual teacher and the school staff benefit:

> Staying in a school group, you get in a rut. Inservice helps you to see what others are doing--the crossing of paths is very beneficial, you pick up new ideas.
>
> It permits a divergent staff to get together and a close staff to diversify.
>
> It permits you to be exposed to other teachers and systems and you appreciate your own system.

In particular, the isolation of the classroom teacher was noted:

> Classroom teachers are isolated, work with customers, and therefore we have to meet as a staff, a profession. Inservice is the only chance to get out.
>
> As a general rule nine-tenths of the changes in my behavior are the result of inservice. I like to think I go with an open mind, to learn and then I evaluate, analyze, change my techniques. I think this is common. I think even the poorest inservice can give you one good idea, for example your plan book, a new display idea--but they are largely a waste of time. However, they're valuable as it's so easy to get into a rut after teaching for a few years, you go into the classroom and close the door--that's a real danger. So just going to activities, for that reason alone, even if it just reinforces your ideas, is valuable.
>
> Certainly just to meet with other administrators and hear their problems (whatever the inservice activity) is good because you become isolated, insulated and think these problems exist only at your school. I think this is also true for teachers, you lose touch with reality, things are blown out of proportion. Inservice forces you to leave the classroom and the school.
>
> Too many instances of isolation, so may be good to get out, meet people from other schools.

The feeling of isolation and the importance to teachers of regular contacts with colleagues is further supported by the revealing comments made by teachers who are the only subject specialists in their schools:

> There's a greater need for inservice if the teacher is the only subject specialist in the school.
>
> What I do enjoy (at inservice activities) is meeting with other librarians in the district because the business of being a librarian is relatively lonely. There may be five social studies teachers in the school so that if you have a problem you can kick it around a bit, but when you are a one-teacher specialist such as the librarian, home economics teacher, you are alone.
>
> I find it a very lonely, isolated job (enrichment teacher) and I need contacts--it helps to dispel feelings of isolation. Now we have other people in the district and have meetings.
>
> I am the only drama teacher in the school and therefore I need contact with others in the area.
>
> Teachers' Convention serves as a vital link as I get to mingle with teachers. There's no other German teachers here.

Teachers remarked on the difficulty of organising formal inservice activities when there are only a few subject specialists in the school system:

> In a specialty area it is difficult to arrange inservice activities, you have to be self-motivated, the responsibility rests on yourself.
>
> They never include anything on the library so we'll get together this year and make something for us--otherwise we tag along with the rest of the teachers.
>
> (Teacher of English and Drama) We do our own outside of the school system--otherwise there's no inservice on drama. English is quite different, there's a highly structured organization.

To Receive Recognition and Confirmation

Teachers want to be reassured that they are performing a worthwhile job:

> There's a need for recognition, a pat on the back, that's of great value. To a great extent we are appreciated by the

> community but are not told about it, we just hear the negative and it's nice to be told. Keynote speakers tell us that, particularly if they are from outside the realm of education, and we take pats on the back and say maybe we're not doing such a bad job.
>
> It's confidence building in some ways. It's hard to get recognition (in teaching) it's one of the problems of the profession. The kids don't say it, adults don't see you perform and you just don't know. There's not the concrete indicators, no barometer for it. Inservice serves that type of purpose, it's confidence building.
>
> Expectations in education are rising, the goal for self is very high and you need something once in a while to tell you, yes, you are doing a good job as much of society takes a negative viewpoint. If 9 out of 10 people say you are doing a good job, you just remember the one who is negative and worry over that--we are seeking perfection--that's the reason for the popularity of the stress workshop in this school.

Attending formal inservice activities affords the teacher an opportunity to feel good about himself:

> (After a particular inservice activity) I felt hey, I'm pretty good, I get a pat on the back--mentally from myself--and even if that's all I come away with, it's something, I feel good about myself and that's worthwhile. It's the same at lunch, you talk over problems, it makes me feel better about mine.
>
> If I feel good the inservice was a success. I know if I deserve a compliment. The honest teacher will know if he deserves a pat on the back. I've gone to inservices and one statement has run through my head again and again and I have said, "Well I know I am not doing it, I have strong reasons for doing what I do"; or, the presenter is right and I am going to change. And you get a pat on the back, or at least you have thought about it.
>
> It makes you a more aware person, even if it doesn't overtly show in the classroom, it makes you feel good about yourself.
>
> If a teacher is a happier person as a result of the break, then he will be happier in the classroom.

Teachers want to receive confirmation that their present teaching practices are appropriate and acceptable:

> To me it is the pat on the back (reasons for attending inservice). You listen to someone and they tell you to do this and that and you are doing it and you say, "Hey, that's what I'm doing," and that's good. There's a lack of pats on the back for teachers, there's no recognition for work on the hall walls--everyone expects you to do it, but you need recognition.
>
> I felt so good when the presenter mentioned certain things I was doing.
>
> It's good to go to conventions, they say "Have you experienced this?" and you say "Hey, I'm not alone."
>
> Often you feel you are working in the dark, you have feelings of insecurity, and therefore you look to inservice for confirmation of what you are doing.
>
> It could be that I could use specific ideas but I think that just sort of getting a feel for what other teachers are doing gives you a way of judging whether you are on the right track.
>
> I look at it not as a presentation of magical things but confirmation of what the teacher is doing. Teachers can have unreal expectations. A pat on the back is good for your self-concept.
>
> You will come back refreshed, revived, even though the presentation only confirms that what you are doing is okay.

To Get an Inspiring Break from Routine

Attending formal inservice activities permits teachers to obtain some welcome mental stimulation:

> I have become jaded, therefore I need something.
>
> If you have been in the profession a long time, it gives you a shot-in-the-arm for a brief time.
>
> Inservice on any topic is refreshing, a change of pace, a little spark. But new recipes never work, rather I look for just one spark.
>
> It lets you recharge your batteries.
>
> Going to meetings, workshops can open up new vistas.

> It's a shot-in-the-arm, and as a result you try something new, you treat children differently.
>
> From a shot-in-the-arm session you get a sparkle and the kids benefit. You rarely walk out of school without saying, "Hey I could have done better."

The timing of a particular activity within the context of the school year is considered to be important:

> Depends what the inservice is on. I said the social studies inservice should have been in September, as all that wasted time, I could have been using the ideas since then. You realize you have been teaching it all wrong for half a year. I think that when it is a new program, inservice should be held in August, or early September. But ones of a general nature--pressures do build up, it's inevitable around this time of year, a very negative time (January)--I like convention (February) as it's a break, that's of value.
>
> After Christmas, there's a slump, and I feel an inservice would get me going again, inspire me a bit.
>
> I want inspiration in the middle of the year.
>
> Although I am cynical about inservices, I still attend and find a stimulating speaker on an interesting topic gives me a feeling of gung ho again, especially at this time of year (early February). That's the way I feel about conferences too, I come back from them rejuvenated, I've seen many people with similar problems solving them in different ways.

One teacher was critical of the convention because it did not provide him with the desired inspiration:

> Convention's been kind of disappointing to me as February is a low time and you are going there looking for a catalyst, something to spark motivation for ideas and the sessions are at the theory level and that would be fine in September or June, to mull over, but at this time you are looking for sparks, motivation, and this is not coming through at the convention.

Another found the break in routine sufficient justification for the convention:

> Offer a teacher a day off now (February) and he'll take it, no matter what. That's the reason for the timing of the convention; this is a long drag in a stressful activity.

Attending formal inservice activities provides a welcome break in the daily routine:

> Inservice, like a staff meeting or parent-teacher interview, is beneficial because it's a break, regardless of what happens. One of the problems of teaching is the rigidity of the day, week framework, the regimented segments ... on an inservice day you are not listening for a bell, that in itself is a benefit and the quality of the session does not affect that benefit.

To Be Reminded of Professional Affiliation

Participating in formal inservice activities helps to remind teachers that they belong to a profession:

> Despite the fact that often offerings are not as useful as one would hope, I think there is an aura of fraternity, of fellowship that surfaces at this type of gathering which makes it worthwhile, regardless of what happens--I belong to a group of people with these goals. You go about your working day and you forget that you belong to a profession.
>
> I am a fraud, a mother disguised as a teacher and inservice activities, conventions make me feel more like a professional.
>
> At inservice activities, professional development days, conventions, you see yourself as a part of a large organization, planning ahead for yourself. They can help you to become a better person. You need a fair amount of time in junior high to recall your humanity.

Worthwhile, Regardless

Teachers agreed that attending formal inservice activities satisifies the foregoing needs--often despite the presenter and his topic:

> Inservice is of benefit even if the speaker is no good. There is always benefit in sharing ideas with someone in the field.
>
> The reason I like different ones (types of inservice activities) is the different base of people, and I get as much benefit from the talk of different people as from the speeches and I see that as of much value as the speaker and if I get both then that's double the benefits. The exchange of ideas is as great as any presenter might give you.
>
> Even if you don't adopt the practice if it excites you then it (inservice) is of value.
>
> You get a great deal of value from organized inservice activities even if you go to bad ones, it shakes up your thinking, you get a new idea. We found out we had social studies books in the storeroom and have been using them ever since. They're stimulating, even despite the speaker. The value is in meeting with colleagues from other schools. I'd never say they're a waste of time as any exchange has to be good.
>
> Even if the presenter is not very good you can get something of value.
>
> I find most of them interesting and if I am not wild about them, at least I learn what not to do. Even if they bore me, I keep the information in my mind.

As one teacher remarked:

> I would hate to think what would happen if I had to plow through it all myself.

CATEGORY FIVE: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON TOPICS OFFERED AT FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Although teachers attend formal inservice education activities for a variety of reasons, but not necessarily for the reasons assumed by others, that is to obtain information which they will use to bring about a major change in their classroom behavior, they do desire activities which will provide them with useful and classroom-related information. The preferred topics fall into the following three broad categories:

- -- Activities which will provide them with information and materials which they can use immediately on their return to the classroom but which require no major change in ideology or current practices.
- -- Awareness level presentations which acquaint teachers with the latest developments in the field of education.
- -- Stimulating, thought-provoking presentations which temporarily remove teachers from the narrow world of the classroom.

Teachers indicated that they choose inservice topics according to their particular needs at that moment in time:

> Activities may be of value or not, depending on whether you have gone through that experience or not come across it.
>
> Depends on the need, if it is to develop skills or to continue to find justification for remaining a teacher, depends on what you are searching for.
>
> I tend to choose what will give a boost, even if it's off the topic. I'll go because I know I'll come back to school uplifted and there's spin-off. Also I'll choose things that will have spin-off to the classroom.
>
> I want stimulating sessions to give me a shot in the arm.
>
> Curriculum sessions, small group basis are very necessary, most beneficial, but I don't want to go to my subject area all the time. I want to hear about new trends, new issues--insurance agents are not given lectures on insurance, they are given inspirational talks on attitude, about themselves, their development. I want to be inspired now and keynote speakers try to do this.
>
> I would choose new areas, not ones identical to university courses and would avoid specific topics I had been exposed to.
>
> If I am in a new area, I like to have as much background information as possible. I went to one on administration, it was excellent, directly interesting to me; I am more interested in areas I am currently in, although I think it is

> good to go and find out about something you are not directly involved in.

When choosing which activities to attend when concurrent sessions are offered, teachers appear to follow a deliberate plan:

> I'll go to one on playgrounds because my school is building one; avoid Kanata Kit because I know something about it; go to the keynote as it's inspirational. I don't go to things specific to other courses although I probably should; I may go to one on reading, even though it's not really my area, and I go to the book display.
>
> You need variety. The keynote speaker to get you fired up and excited about teaching and then other more practical sessions where you can share in and get involved, ones with hands-on activities. But if you just go to the keynote, you go to get fired up, all excited, and then you say "Hey, I am not like that, I mustn't be a good teacher," or you try it, it flops, as you don't have enough information, and you get depressed. It's high standards we set for ourselves, we can't reach them, and therefore we are in trouble, so stress.
>
> I prefer a pot pourri. I am going to the Plato system; one on computers, it's my area of interest; chisenbop, I'll get a few pointers on; and Bargen on leadership skills.

Teachers rated highly topics of a practical nature that relate to their current teaching assignment:

> Some inservices have been very disappointing. I am looking for information to help me become more skillful as a teacher but often I don't find inservice that practical. It seems that when I talk to other teachers we are looking for very practical teaching strategies and it turns out not to be on that ... not specific enough.
>
> For me the workshop was really exciting. Teachers telling how they selected students, dealt with problems and they got down to what they actually did. With the grade 3's they did this, with the grade 4's this, using Bloom's taxonomy. The questions to ask, right down to the nitty gritty ... just a wealth of information for me.
>
> I think inservice should be seen as practical aids for the teacher. They should really be how-to sessions for the most part, for something like instituting a new curriculum. It's

> fine to give the rationale, but you are not going to think that is relevant unless you tie it in with new procedures or old procedures tried in a new way. We've just had a social studies inservice with two very good presenters--very good because they had practical things to say, what to do, procedures, follow-up, the educational rationale for the way they do things.
>
> I want practical stuff that I can use/translate into classroom activities.
>
> It should be something that helps us in the classroom, not general like stress.
>
> The emphasis should be on helping teachers in the classroom, zeroing in on programs we are using now.
>
> I want something I can use, ideas to help me in my job.
>
> I want to satisfy my classroom needs right now.
>
> I prefer highly technical workshops, with teaching techniques, lesson plans--I want concrete activities for the classroom.
>
> A good one is by the author of the text in use. Also, when a classroom teachers talks about a common text, its strengths and weaknesses, and gives classroom materials.
>
> There should be inservice on a subject area when you are teaching it for the first time.

Practical classroom-related help was desired particularly by those who could not get assistance in school:

> I want help with my subject areas, especially when there is no specialized consultant.
>
> There should be information to help elementary teachers who have no department heads and many subjects.

They viewed particularly favourably presentations that permitted them to become involved:

> I like ones that you participate in, in my subject area.
>
> I want hands-on, small group activities given by presenters who have dealt with the same age level and situation as you.

> I like sessions that offer involvement, not passive ones. Ones where there's an opportunity for the group to indicate to the presenter what they want to zero in on.

And presentations that include new ideas requiring materials that are currently available in the school are considered excellent:

> I want hands-on inservice using materials that are available in our school. I don't want to be given ideas that you can't carry out yourself.
>
> I like practical sessions using materials at present in our school.

Some wanted to be exposed to new knowledge in the field of education:

> To know what is current in educational thought.
>
> After a few years in teaching you lose touch with what's going on; inservice keeps you in touch with the latest developments.
>
> Helps keep the teacher abreast of the latest ideas.
>
> Of value to elementary teachers as you teach many subjects and you may not have university training in all of the subjects.

Others, however, did not want topics that relate to their present teaching assignment:

> I want to do things we would not normally do, to extend our minds.
>
> Non-teaching ones are pleasant because you are a member of the human race.
>
> I went to a presentation by a psychologist. The presentation was mainly full of jokes, you kept on laughing and he felt that while you kept on laughing you couldn't be getting an ulcer or a breakdown, and it was a real contribution to mental health. But the presentation had nothing to do with the classroom. He felt if you came away seeing things differently the laughter was of benefit; you would benefit and the students would too. And I agree.

A few of the inservice topics offered caused some consternation, however:

> I have difficulty, some question, about people learning such skills as skiing on p.d. days; there's a difference between professional development and personal development.

Yet, on the other hand:

> I took ceramics for seven hours; I am not going to teach it but it was relaxing to sit at the workshop and there's a spin-off to the classroom.

A common complaint concerning the topics offered was the lack of variety:

> The topics are so overworked already that I am beginning to find p.d. days useless.
>
> The last one of value was on student teaching, but next year it was the same topic again.
>
> Right now I am cynical about inservice, p.d., the whole thing. I see a lot of waste in it and a great deal of repetition.
>
> They're repetitious--the first time it's good.
>
> For the first few years there were some good topics (p.d. days) but now they're running out of steam.

But, organizing formal inservice activities is not easy, as teachers pointed out:

> You have to scrabble to come up with good topics and people who are exciting, appealing, broad-based. There's a lack of money so it's hard to put on good p.d. days and workshops. I don't know any presenters as I don't come from here but other people don't seem to know who's available either.
>
> Often you get a topic because one person thinks it is good, or wants to 'change' the staff, but the audience has not

> indicated that it wants this topic. The topic must be relevant and wanted by the group.
>
> Although you conduct a needs assessment, still the choice of the actual presentation is limited by the time and energy of the presenter, what he wishes to say, and what those hiring him wish him to say.

And, it must be kept in mind that:

> There is no ideal, there must be variety (of topics) as there are different reasons for attending (formal inservice activities).

CATEGORY SIX: CHANGES IN ATTITUDE OVER TIME TOWARDS FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Many teachers indicated that they could discern a distinct change over time in their attitude towards formal inservice activities and the types of activities they chose to attend. Some noted that their interest in formal activities had increased over the years:

> Before I did not think much was valuable; now I see some things as broadening and with experience it is easier to pick out the things of value. I remember in the first couple of years thinking why didn't they offer things that were going to be of value.
>
> I have been teaching for seven years and I am more interested in inservices now, especially if they are organized to meet the specific needs of teachers, they will be of real value.

Others, however, reported a general decline in interest in inservice activities from their neophyte days:

> When I was a young teacher I enjoyed inservice, it was fun, it gave me things I didn't know. I haven't been to a decent inservice in years.

> I am reluctant to spend my own time at inservice; I did not have this problem when I was a younger teacher.
>
> Initially I went to functions because I had to, I didn't know any better; now I am more selective.
>
> I don't attend now, but I used to, the first couple of years.
>
> Inservice is for younger teachers; now I decline a substitute.

Many experienced teachers complained about the repetitious nature of formal inservice activities:

> As a science teacher I went to inservices for three years in a row and felt that was enough. Then I changed to math, and after a while I felt that was enough, and after a few years I stopped applying for specialist council inservices as they were becoming very repetitive.
>
> As a beginning teacher I went to inservice regularly, then I found they were repeated. I don't go to many now.
>
> I am aware already that I am becoming more selective--I am aware of the repetitious nature of certain inservices.
>
> They're geared towards younger teachers; they're not of any value for more experienced teachers as they've heard them all before.

There was a feeling that teachers should be able to choose how to spend days when students were released from classes:

> Over ten years I have seen every approach from the evangelical to the practical, hands-on and now it seems that there is a need on p.d. days to let me come to school in my jeans and have time to myself in my personal school environment.

Teachers noted that they desired different types of inservice activities once they had been teaching for a few years and felt they had basic teaching strategies and subject matter under control:

> My interests have switched quite dramatically. For the first three or four years in teaching, I was more interested in survival, I had no time to go anywhere, do anything.
>
> I think the beginning teacher tends to look for more things that could help him in the classroom be a better teacher as he is groping. A more experienced teacher feels more confident, goes to more abstract, inspirational things, probably why I prefer conventions now.
>
> When I first started I felt incomplete and I went to everything. Now I feel more competent and I know how to teach reading, I have used four different language arts series, I have accumulated that knowledge and used it so I don't go to language arts sessions. I would go to social studies as I don't know as much.
>
> After the first degree, the first few things you go to you want someone to tell you what to do on Monday morning. Once you've got the day-to-day under control, you can stand back and look at the broader picture; you are more theory oriented. Same applies when you make a change--grade or subject.
>
> Beginning teachers want masses of concrete ideas, they want to be reassured. You get older, have been at it longer, and inspiration is more important to you.
>
> I like some of the philosophical things now; before I went to practical ones. I like to go to them because it gives me a different mind set as I have a handle on things I am teaching now. So I tend to go to more general sessions or just to go for personal interest. I may never have to teach the topic but it sounds interesting, it's my turn to learn something new, to get my mind going.
>
> I've been a teacher for 20 years, I've been to so many language arts inservices that I don't want to zero in on specifics anymore, I want to broaden myself as a person.

Several noted that there was a particular pattern to the types of formal inservice activities desired and attended:

> There is a pattern, a change. At first you are insecure, you have to do a great job in many areas, and you attend inservice randomly, with not much selection. As a beginning teacher I would go to just anything, every area had to be dealt with as well as possible; and then after I had taught a few years I became more selective, I chose them on the basis of interest

> and areas of weakness, self-identified, not recommended by other people.
>
> I have changed, I know. I know I felt at the beginning like I needed to know more and more and more and more, I was not confident of subject matter, teaching style, I wanted to change, to test more things, and gradually I went to only those things that confirmed my teaching style. Now I've gone the full circle, I am conducting inservices and I find I am learning as much from the people I am giving inservices to.
>
> At the moment I go to ones not in my subject area, more to p.d. ones, language arts ones because I feel that's a weakness I have. I did go through a time when I looked only at my strengths, confirmation of, now I look at my weaknesses.
>
> I think you go through a cycle in any kind of job; high interest, ignorance, trying to identify needs, trying to find ways of developing, becoming satisfied, maybe even boredom. So I think there is some kind of pattern in any given job.
>
> Part of a career cycle--you get the day-to-day teaching thing down and then you decide you need more specific information on an area, for example, a one week session on math--I found the undergrad. courses I'd taken to be not enough.

CATEGORY SEVEN: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON ATTENDANCE AND TIMING OF FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

It became obvious from the interviews and conversations with teachers that their attitude towards formal inservice education activities was inextricably linked to the timing of such activities, whether they were held during or outside of the school day, and whether attendance was mandatory or voluntary.

Many teachers feel strongly that all formal inservice activities should be held during the regular school day:

> A lot of inservice is after school and that's not right, they should be within the working day.

> There should be more release time built into the school day. Businesses pay employees to attend in working hours; but teachers go on their own time and use their own money.

They want more release time built into the school year as they consider release time to be their right as a professional not a privilege:

> I do not think teachers are lucky to get release time. I look at it from a year-long viewpoint. I work as hard as my husband and we (teachers) cram it into 40 weeks, we average a good 50 hours a week. I don't look at inservice as release time but as part of the annual salary of the job.

As one teacher succinctly stated:

> Inservice should be content-focused, September to June, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. with time off (from classes).

Mandatory versus Voluntary Activities

Teachers expressed opinions on the topic of mandatory versus voluntary inservice education. On the one hand teachers proffered the viewpoint that a professional will avail himself of inservice whenever the need arises, that keeping current is a personal responsibility and that forcing attendance is not viewed favourably.

> More and more teachers object to having time structured. We will talk shop at a party but not at the district office in the evening. It seems that teachers and other professionals don't want to have inservice laid on us, we want to have a choice.

Others pointed out, realistically, that teachers tend to avoid optional activities and therefore there is a need for some mandatory inservice:

> If it's optional, those most needing it won't go.

> Teachers tend to avoid certain activities, even though they know they will be beneficial.
>
> It would be really easy to avoid inservice so you have to force yourself because afterwards you say "Well, I got something out of it." But it requires a lot of effort.
>
> It is important that it's mandatory, especially when it's on new curriculum. We have to be forced to go to some things, even though we know we need it, and afterwards you say "I am glad someone forced me to do that."

One who saw attending formal inservice activities as the professional responsibility of the teacher commented on those who avoid even mandatory activities:

> I disagree with those who do not go. We are supposed to, it is our obligation, our responsibility. It is a day (professional development day) to grow professionally, not to get caught up-to-date with the housekeeping activities of teaching and I think it is terrible (that some do that). If I am going to catalogue my resources I think the working day can accommodate these works. Teaching is a stressful, tiring job and you are performing all the time but I think you can go at least another hour after the bell goes to do the cleanup and planning and any visiting of schools you can fit in. Professional development is basically an obligation, morally, and a professional duty, especially when it is a costly expenditure for the board.

Personal Life versus Professional Life

Teachers appear to be very conscious of having limited time and energy and this concern is reflected in their reluctance to attend formal inservice activities held out of school hours:

> Inservice is an important part of your career but don't ask me to go on my own time.
>
> I don't mind devoting some of my own time but when you ask me to go at four o'clock I don't have very much to put into it, nor do other teachers and when you are not alert, you won't get much out of it. Teachers are worn out by the end of the school day.

> After school, people are short tempered, they have other things on their mind. It's amazing how much people do when they are fresh in the morning.

Both male and female teachers mentioned the importance of a life outside of one's professional life and their reluctance to give up family and social activities.

> I have limited time and energy; I have other things beyond the profession.
>
> I have a family so want sessions in school time.
>
> I would like more activities but must be realistic, I have family commitments.
>
> I shy away from sessions after school, around the dinner hour and on Saturdays. Those involved generally are men, and women with no families.
>
> Attitude depends on the amount of spare time the teacher has. I am part-time therefore I don't mind evening or Saturday workshops but if I were full-time I might feel differently.

Two conflicting views on professional responsibility emerged:

> I have a family and it comes first, therefore I resent after-school inservice ... I see inservice as a necessary part of professional development geared to me as a school teacher and school days should be devoted to that. Once it's a pressure on my home life I won't get as much out of it. I will go after school if I think the session will be worth the sacrifice but if not, I'd rather be at home. I do have to sort out my priorities.
>
> A true and honest professional will give up the weekend. If you are really sincere you will come out. I realize the family is important too but you should make time for sessions.

However, if teachers can be guaranteed that the rewards will match the sacrifices, they will attend inservice activities held in the evening and at the weekend:

> Depends on the value of the session. If you can be guaranteed it will be worthwhile, then I don't mind evening, or weekend, but before I am going to pay for a babysitter, I am not shooting in the dark.
>
> If something is good and going to help me I don't mind going out of school time but if everything was out of school time I might feel differently.
>
> I prefer inservices in school time as I get tired but I will attend after-school inservices if I feel they are of value.

As one teacher explained:

> Teachers fear they (inservice activities) are a waste of time because they frequently have been that. They want a guarantee that when they spend time, it will pay off. They expect their time to be wasted and they are surprised when inservice is of value. Also there's the problem of conservation of resources, a personal thing: how much can I spend and still survive as a human being? They do have time and energy if they can be guaranteed a payoff--no time means no time to waste on inservice if they are guaranteed only a 20 per cent chance of it being worthwhile.

CATEGORY EIGHT: TEACHERS' VIEWS ON PRESENTERS AT FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Inservice education presenters were subjected to a great deal of criticism from participants. Teachers have quite specific and fairly consistent views on the attributes of effective presenters and the qualities they find undesirable.

They particularly dislike presenters who do not have recent classroom experience, who are not practical, and who drop in, give a standard speech and leave:

> Don't want presenters who are idealistic, who've been too long away from the classroom.

> I see pie in the sky regarding some of the solutions; talk so far from reality, in terms of a surrogate mother and so forth and I turn around and say "Gosh, what is my function in the classroom, I can't be all things to all people," but I am realistic, and that is his point of view.
>
> Unrealistic, anyone can perform beautifully once a month.
>
> Your usual inservice type is a person who talks but doesn't come back to the situation.
>
> I'm not interested in a professor from the U.S.A. on a circuit with a canned presentation.
>
> I'm not interested in a guest speaker who comes with a prepared speech and trots it out.

The presenter does make a difference:

> Although a one hour workshop is of no value (as far as changing behavior) if there is an imaginative presenter with good communication skills, he might capture your interest and you pursue the topic on your own.
>
> The excellent presenters were a large part of the value of the new social studies curriculum inservice.

Most teachers preferred presenters who were experienced classroom teachers:

> Must be an experienced teacher with feasible ideas; you forget what the classroom is like.
>
> Inservice should be given by people who are currently in the classroom; not out of the classroom people who are dealing with the theoretical side of curriculum.
>
> I want presenters who have dealt with the same age level, situation, as you.

Presentations by teachers who supplemented their talk with handouts were viewed very favourably:

> I like workshops by a teacher who has been involved, who is considered to be successful, and who has brought the necessary a.v. and handouts.
>
> Hands-on sessions, something to pick up and take with you--the only way it will come back to the classroom. Having something in the hand definitely increases the chances of something happening in the classroom.
>
> I want handouts to summarize as people remember 5 per cent of what they hear; it ensures the presenter gets his points over.
>
> I want activities that have lots of handouts to go over on your own time. Sometimes you walk away and you may have nothing except your own notes but if you have a fairly comprehensive handout that is really helpful; sometimes I have chosen certain inservices because they have really valuable handouts.
>
> I want concrete activities, books, handouts, things to help me remember three months later.

The reputation and personality of the presenter appear to affect teachers' perception of the value of the presentation:

> The presenter must have credibility.
>
> When I look at inservice activities offered, I look not only at the subject matter but also at the names of speakers; if the speaker has a good reputation I will go as I know it is likely to be good.

Not surprisingly, teachers preferred presenters who treated them as adults:

> I like presenters who do not talk down to the audience.
>
> I want someone who is able to come into the session with a vast amount of knowledge in the area but then be sensitive to the needs of the group.
>
> I dislike presenters who talk down to you: "Do you all have your pencils, let me see."

Teachers disliked presenters who adopt a negative stance and who offer no help:

> I have a very difficult time with many of the presenters dwelling on negatives; I get very frustrated when I go (to inservice) and someone tells us what we are doing wrong but doesn't say how to change the approach. At the last convention I left before the end of the session; I could have throttled the presenter as he spoke to all the problems, but offered no solutions.
>
> I was unhappy with the one on stress as there was no help for classroom teachers, no indicators, measures one can take to alleviate stress. Teachers are looking for help from sessions--presenters don't seen to have that in mind.
>
> My chief complaint is the negative attitude of presenters. They state problems, diagnose them, but offer no solutions--I know the problems, I am coming for the solutions.
>
> We do need a balance between theory and practical but there tends to be too much theory. They always say they are not going to deal with teaching strategies yet that's what you really want.
>
> I don't want a downer, that's so depressing; I want a keynote speaker to be someone to uplift me, stimulate me, make me think.

One teacher expressed some sympathy for presenters:

> I think we have been too critical of presenters. I know I have been guilty of it; but if you don't put anything into it, you won't get anything out of it.

Some believe that there is no need for expensive out of towners when there are "just as good at home."

> Inservice does not have to be a costly thing as within the school district there is an array of talents, it need not be costly apart from release time. We do not have to go beyond our own area for speakers, although on occasion we can, as there are good people here.

On the other hand, others like the opportunity to hear speakers whom one would "have to travel thousands of miles to see."

Concern was expressed regarding the lack of good presenters:

> We have had all the good speakers who are available. Now we will take anyone who will come.

Given the large numbers of teachers who wish to have presentations made by practising classroom teachers, it is surprising that more teachers do not volunteer. Many teachers are qualified:

> We have developed so much of our program and supplemented it that in many cases we could give inservices.
>
> Others (teachers) who were attending the conference, they should have been giving it, not attending it.

But as one teacher/presenter pointed out:

> There's a lack of good, qualified teacher presenters. Teachers are too involved in the classroom to take the time out to be presenters and now they want top quality presenters, with a.v., and it becomes so professional that the teacher feels more insecure (therefore reluctant to volunteer).

A few of the teachers who participated in the study also gave presentations at formal inservice activities and they volunteered some illuminating insights into how they perceived teachers as participants:

> Teachers are the worst people to teach--they're cynical, rude, don't listen, ask stupid questions.
>
> Teachers behave like students--snickering, not participating, not coming back for the second half.
>
> Teachers turn their backs on inservices as they feel they know everything--there is nothing new you can tell us.
>
> Guest speakers are always a bust as teachers are caught up in their egos and think they know all there is to know.

Teachers offered some advice to presenters:

> The presenter must be desired by the group, not put on them by someone in authority.
>
> Presenters should be seen as useful to teachers, have credibility, be classroom teachers with years of experience. Not the usual type of presenter who does not return to the situation.
>
> If you write your own ticket, don't be a downer, teachers want someone to uplift them, stimulate.
>
> If you give a canned presentation, be sure it is what the teachers want.
>
> Include a lot of dialogue between the presenter and audience.
>
> If you are a teacher and a presenter you need to be accepted in both roles by colleagues.
>
> The ones involved in inservicing (presenters) should be involved in the classroom with the teacher showing her how the idea should be working in her classroom, with her students.

CATEGORY NINE: TEACHERS' CRITICISMS OF FORMAL INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Many of the criticisms levelled at formal inservice activities indicate that such sessions tend to violate the known principles of adult learning. As one teacher stated, "You need to treat an adult as an adult." Teachers pointed out how individual needs vary:

> All are not ready for it (inservice activity) at the same time.
>
> Many people, many needs; therefore it requires different approachs to suit the different personalities of different teachers.
>
> You should look at individual needs and then look at sessions to help teachers grow.

> We never say: what would you like to do to be a better teacher, given your classroom, given you, what would you like to change/improve?
>
> Some need structured activities, others seek new ideas on their own.

In particular, teachers expressed a strong desire to have individualized inservice education which meets their self-identified needs:

> I firmly believe that inservice and professional development is very self-directed and self-defined and the job of the organization (school system) is to provide opportunities for people to encounter different opportunities ... I would like to see more individualization of p.d., less group think, give all the time and money to the school and let the teachers do what they want ... the choice of activity should come from personal needs ... the benefits must outweigh the costs before one is interested in doing something ... One of the things wrong with p.d., inservice is it assumes certain things about teachers and that's not a good way to organize. Professional development days are in trouble for that reason; they try to meet all needs, all categories of needs, they're a waste of time.
>
> I think most of the inservices are put on without looking at the ideas of teachers and their needs and what they want. One group sits down and decides what they think teachers want but no attempt is made to match the needs of teachers with what is organized, no attempt at all.
>
> P.D. should occur when a person needs the growth. You should get release time when you decide you need it.

Teachers want to choose, not be told, what to attend and when:

> Ideas for inservice tend to come from the top down.
>
> They tend to be teacher prescribed sessions from the organizer and therefore do not always meet the needs of teachers.
>
> Teachers go to conferences, workshops we think are important.
>
> Teachers say, let me as a professional say where I want to put the time and if I am putting in here, let me take it from there. For example, I'd rather stay longer at school, discussing planning, and not go the afternoon session of

> professional development days. I really do p.d. activities at other times, not necessarily on official professional development days--it's a kind of a trade-off thing.
>
> There should be a choice of activities--do what you want whether it is socializing or workshops.
>
> We used to have inservice every week after school on math. I was so mad at having to go and so tired that none of it made any sense.

Teachers were critical of presentations which adopted the deficit approach and the banking concept of education and of the passive role they were expected to assume at such presentations:

> I feel that if teachers were more actively involved in inservice rather than listening to a speaker passively, it would be of more benefit.
>
> Teachers look mostly for a chance to exchange ideas with others rather than being told.
>
> I like the one-to-one approach in inservice where I am asked for my ideas, not preached to; informal sessions where my ideas are of importance.
>
> I think inservice should not offer criticism but rather alternatives, based on the strengths of teachers.

As one teacher summed up:

> Inservice must be individualized, meet the particular needs of the individual, and treat an adult as an adult. If you do that growth is fantastic.

However some teachers pointed out that teachers, individually and as a profession, have a responsibility to be more actively involved in identifying their professional development needs:

> Don't think even they know what they want.
>
> I have always been interested in professional development but don't think many teachers are, they've not been given the

> concept of looking, planning, thinking, listening. When you say, "What should we do on p.d. days?" everyone looks blank and panics.
>
> It's the needs assessment business we are falling down on. It's not the fault of the planning committees, dedicated people with good intentions--I've worked on the committees--but piecemeal activities. I really think teachers need to be more involved, need to identify what they want--should have a plan, identify deficiencies.

School professional development representatives found teachers to be apathetic:

> Teachers complain a lot about activities but don't give them a lot of thought; they're not interested in being involved in planning.
>
> I am the p.d. rep., most responses (to requests for suggestions) are neutral. I think it relates to the failure of many inservice activities, they've not been of major importance to the teachers, therefore inservice is not of any consequence and they accept the banality of the p.d., inservice situation and don't realize that it could be changed.

And this belief was supported by the comments of teachers:

> I guess my only real beef is that they (p.d. days) are never planned. They occur on the spur of the moment and are an excuse to go out for lunch. I'm not knocking lunch, but they need planning too ... or rather, are planned but not thoughtfully planned, not planned as I want them ... I am too busy right now to be involved in the planning.

Unfortunately, attempts at identifying continuing education needs and planning appropriate activities are hampered by the lack of a comprehensive plan for teacher professional development.

> P.D. is offered piecemeal. You are made to go to activities but there's no plan when you compare it to other professions--they have a more definite role for professionals in their training, they insist on certain things and perhaps they make people more aware of what they should be looking at (re p.d.). We don't do that in education yet.

> The ATA has no overall plan the way other professional organizations give more direction. They're well intentioned but not meeting our needs. They will come around and help, but won't impose. Given the fact that professional development chairmen are chairmen for one to two years, they are not competent to give direction, be a leader. The ATA had an issues project, but the issues are theirs.

Other criticisms relating to such externals as timing, location, presenters and topics are included under those category headings.

CATEGORY TEN: NON-FORMAL FORMS OF INSERVICE EDUCATION

During the course of the interviews with teachers it quickly became very apparent that teachers continue their professional education in a variety of ways. Attending formal activities is but one of these ways and to many teachers a less significant method of obtaining information which they will use to improve their classroom effectiveness than non-formal methods. The most commonly cited non-formal ways in which teachers gain knowledge which relates to their classroom behavior were through daily contacts with colleagues, reading professional literature, being involved with new programs, having student teachers, watching others teach and attending extra-curricular activities that have spin-off to the classroom.

Informal, Ongoing Contacts with Colleagues

Of particular importance and benefit to teachers are ongoing contacts with colleagues in their own school:

> Yet it goes on all the time--when you think about it, professional development goes on all the time in the staffroom.

> Daily interaction with colleagues is very important, especially as we work within a department and this building is planned around departments so we work as a group and discuss problems as a group.
>
> A lot of inservice needs can be met by talking with other teachers.
>
> You get ideas from the staff around you, it's ongoing. I've been in non-sharing schools and that's awful. Ongoing is very important, especially for beginning teachers.
>
> I can see myself when I first started teaching, I had a B.Ed., and the kinds of things I needed at that time were more general information for myself, perhaps controlling kids' behavior, basic kinds of information, day-by-day operational theory, the completion of the register, textbooks, and that kind of inservicing came from the people around me.
>
> The daily sharing of ideas with staff, an ongoing thing--of great value. People are always throwing ideas around and you can accept or reject them. A lot of people are trying to develop curriculum by going to Teachers Stores and they come back and share. The librarian lets us see new books and we become familiar with what is available for us and for our students.
>
> I think if you keep your mind open you can get good ideas from colleagues, in unstructured ways.
>
> Colleagues are very important. We spot things related to fitness in magazines, we talk, and we are constantly bringing in things to share with each other, things of value for the classroom.

Many teachers consider these contacts to be a more valuable way of obtaining classroom-related knowledge and getting assistance with areas of concern than attending formal inservice activities (apart from those that accompany a mandatory program change). As one teacher stated, "peer-based consultation, one-to-one, or small group, is more important than formal inservice workshops."

> Ninety per cent of my teaching knowledge is from talking to other teachers, not from teacher education, not from inservice. In our school there are 6 grade one teachers, a lot of meetings, we share ideas. There's one teacher here

> with 15 years of experience, she is very good at explaining things, she gives us ideas when we are at a loss. In the other school I was at, no one said 'boo' to me, but since I have been here I have learned so much ... I learned to become a teacher through practicums and being in this school for several years because people have been so good about sharing ideas.
>
> The daily contact with colleagues is most important as far as getting ideas. You gain more than in a formal professional development session. Informally is a much better way of getting ideas. ... We discuss before school particular lessons ... this staff is very free to share experiences, ideas and it can't be measured but is of great value. Perhaps we don't even consider that we are sharing and I think this staff does a lot of sharing that they don't even realize they are doing.
>
> I pick up more in the staffroom during the course of the year than at workshops.
>
> I've not been to an inservice in years, I hear new ideas on the grapevine.
>
> Here then is a lot of inservicing going on ... people send xerox copies of stuff. Just yesterday someone sent me a whole batch of materials from an inservice they attended and another friend is going to send me information. Basically this is ongoing, perhaps you put more faith in help from colleagues, in the credibility of colleagues. Inservices may not be as relevant as the day-to-day exchanges we have--the interacting is very important, you can appreciate their efforts.
>
> If I can turn them (inservice presentations) around and it helps in the classroom, that's fine. But I feel I can pick up classroom ideas by talking to staff.
>
> I get most of my ideas from informal rap sessions with teachers from other schools, and from other districts. Teachers are great for talking shop. Here the same thing. Also I get ideas from colleagues in this school, we sit and talk. It's very unrealistic to think we would get anything like that from an inservice--I may sound jaded but I am not. I also get ideas from former students and present students. I really listen to students and take that into consideration for next year.
>
> Daily contact with colleagues is of great value, maybe more so than enforced sessions, yet at the beginning of a new curriculum, workshops are of value. But now I have heard it all before.

As one teacher put it:

> I would rather get together with a teacher in my area than listen to a speaker who is not relevant.

Indeed, the main benefit derived from attending meetings was associating with colleagues:

> I taught grade one for nine years and every month we had a grade one level meeting and though I hated going I got ideas and learned from other teachers.

Professional Literature

Professional reading is considered to be very important:

> Reading books, periodicals is of great value, I've become familiar with the ATA library, the librarian has been very useful to me. Four years ago I went to see her and I try to visit there once every three months and I phone her.
>
> Going to the library, reading lots of books in preparation for a new assignment, that helped me greatly.
>
> I get a lot of ideas from professional reading, I read as much as I can. Also the sharing of ideas--the reason I came to this school from a small school.
>
> From a personal point of view, 90 per cent of what I have learned about improving teaching came from my own personal development--reading, searching, 10 percent from inservice activities. I rely on publications, to improve, also talking with colleagues.

Program Development

Some teachers cited their involvement with new programs:

> I pilot every program I am asked to, the reason being that when you pilot you get information, some of the general philosophy of the new program, from the department of education. You get the publisher providing two to three inservices throughout the year (after school, I would like to see them during school time, but I still think they are valuable). This is the only kind of inservicing I have had in the last 12 years.

> My professional development comes from work with colleagues in school and from my choice of extra-curricular activities, reading too ... a lot comes through the introduction of new programs.

Having Student Teachers and Watching Others Teach

Several mentioned the benefits derived from having student teachers and watching others teach:

> Student teachers, they're a a two-way benefit, a part of inservice, professional development. Student teachers are aware of what's going on in university.
>
> Student teachers--if you are going to view it as a sharing of ideas not the master teacher approach, showing them how to teach--and work as a team with goals and so forth. You find out what new things are happening at the university, what techniques. And if the teacher allows the student teacher to use his own techniques, then you can use it as an inservice. We had three student teachers in our school this fall, it really had an effect on the school because the teachers let the students use their own skills and talents and university information, really had an effect and was an inservice for the whole staff.
>
> You can get professional growth by watching other teachers in action in their school. Also working with student teachers is a professional activity and every teacher could benefit from it.
>
> Getting away and watching teachers teach is the most beneficial.
>
> Lots of teachers have decided that it is valuable for them to observe teachers in other schools so we have subs. in for half a day.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Many chose extra-curricular activities that will have some spin-off to the classroom:

> I am involved in the Edmonton Regional Science Fair and it provides me with a different perspective on teaching because it is an administrative kind of job and I meet a lot of

> people. I talk to teachers and administrators and it's a very informal sort of talking and somehow I always seem to get ideas from them, from listening to people excited about new ideas, new things they are doing--and a good listener can learn a lot by listening to an excited talker.
>
> I am involved in a lot of other things after school and although they're not related specifically to teaching, they can aid my relationship with kids in class. For example swimming class, outdoor ed., craft things, art classes. My p.d. comes through work with colleagues in school, it also comes from my choice of extra-curricular activities, reading too.

CATEGORY ELEVEN: TEACHERS' COMMENTS RELATING TO INSERVICE EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF DISTRICT OFFICE

The district or central office organizes many of the formal inservice education activities attended by teachers and also provides some funds for individual professional development. Consequently, teachers' conversations were liberally sprinkled with references to their employer, commonly referred to as district or central office, or d.o. or c.o.

Many teachers expressed the belief that the public views those days when students are released from classes in order to permit teachers to attend formal inservice activities as holidays for teachers. Those teachers desired their district office to conduct some type of public relations campaign to acquaint the public with the importance of and the varied, often non-visible nature of teacher continuing professional education. In particular the public should realize that teachers can be involved in worthwhile learning activities without necessarily assembling as a large group.

> I have a feeling that the public sees release time as not necessary for teachers who are over-paid and have too many holidays as it is.
>
> The public relations bit--school systems are not very good at it. You need to educate the public on the need for inservice--it's not necessarily teachers all together in a school.
>
> Perhaps we need to educate the public regarding the nature of teachers' professional development, that it is ongoing and therefore we don't all need to congregate together and do visible things to justify professional development days.
>
> We need to educate the pubic regarding the importance of professional development for teachers, that days when the students are not there, or you have subs., are not a holiday for teachers.

And the public should be made aware of the fact that social activities have a spin-off that ultimately benefits students:

> If the public could be made to realize that even if all we do is go downtown and have a couple of drinks, getting away from stress for two days is going to benefit the students. Also, when three teachers get together they immediately begin to talk shop, so this discussion is beneficial.

Teachers pointed out that other professions do not appear to have to justify continuing education activities:

> School boards, unlike corporations, have not yet recognized that they must invest in employees as human resources.
>
> My brother's a pathologist and always going to conferences, he spends four to five weeks so doing. Teachers are so highly visible, something must happen to the kids when the teacher's not there. We need to change public attitude.

However, teachers are aware of school boards' delicate political situation and public dislike of cancelled classes:

> If you looked at professional development days as a school board, politically, what is best, you want everyone in this

> one hall for inservice so everyone can see them. It's easy to rationalize to the constituents. Maybe we have to educate constituents as much as we educate teachers--teachers are involved in p.d. all year long and we share all year long. I think it would be better for inservice if you told people what happens.
>
> On the last professional development days, they complained about the number of people who did not show up for sessions. The school board--politics--must justify professional development days to the community. The school board has difficulty in dealing with professional development days that are not visible.
>
> I very much question whether it (inservice) can be done in a day. I would rather see a week-long conference that teachers would go to, or even a two-day conference, that would be a much better type of development. My husband works for the government and they do fantastic things for developing their staff in a professional way to become better and I feel education falls down. This type of p.d. would be refreshing for teachers and you would come back a lot more enthusiastic, stimulated. It would be sound educationally but I know the public doesn't see it this way, they would see it more as holidays.

Many teachers were dissatisfied with the activities organized by their district office and felt that only those topics considered appropriate by district office were offered:

> The inservicing going on right now within the district is aimed at inservicing for the kinds of skills that the C.O. sees as important.
>
> It focuses on one small specific aspect and it's done randomly. It doesn't always meet the needs of the teacher at the time because most p.d. days are prescribed sessions from the organizer rather than from the teachers whereas the value of professional development is to pursue on your own, focusing on yourself and self-initiated and therefore it's of more value.
>
> The ones I am interested in are not funded and the ones funded I am not interested in.
>
> There's no survey of staff to determine needs--although they may go through the motions.
>
> Even with needs assessments, only popular topics are approved.

> I have written on sheets what I want (p.d. days) but I've never got it yet. There's a lack of communication between what I want and what is being offered.

Also the random nature of the activities came in for some criticism:

> I'm sorry there's no theme.
>
> A lot of these activities happen because the time has been made available but I do not think the best activities have been organized.
>
> What great problem areas can be solved with a one afternoon workshop?

The district or central office, however, was praised for its involvement in inservice education:

> C.O. provides more money for inservice for teachers now. It is more aware, there's more money for subs., courses, workshops.
>
> We are most fortunate in this district; central office is very understanding and cooperative regarding inservices and workshops, conventions and p.d. funds.
>
> We have been given funds to organize our own in-school inservice activities, and of course this has been very useful as it has allowed teachers to organize their own activities.

But some teachers cynically pointed out that activities organized on school days when students are released from classes do not involve the school system in any additional major expenditures:

> The C.O. won't support anything that costs real money.
>
> School boards are not going to complain regarding professional development days as they are not paying extra money.
>
> Professional development days involve no direct cost to the system for the loss of two teaching days.
>
> The Board won't complain about p.d. days as it is not paying out any extra money but I wanted to take a course and get the Board to pay the cost of the course and a sub., but it was not

> interested, the same with a summer school session, that costs real money.

Some felt that in its approach to inservice education their district office was ignoring the needs of individual teachers and the individual school:

> C.O. should see that there is adequate inservice for teachers in the district. It is important to have a central focus in the district, but also to take care of the separate needs of individual schools.
>
> Inservice could and should be meaningful. The lack of interest stems from a lack of input. Although there's a needs assessment, the topics chosen are supposed to appeal to large numbers and therefore don't really appeal to anyone, they're not individual enough. The policy is that individual schools can't get together as a school--teachers want to--but the push in the district is towards standardization, to have common inservice as they don't want the school to develop on its own, want to standardize. Therefore they offer common professional development days. Yet normally in a school day there's not enough time for the school to function as a group entity--same problem with convention, but you expect that. I think there has to be more concessions regarding time and money for inservice.
>
> So difficult to meet, you want to sit down and talk but not enough time, and on official p.d. days so organized, sitting and listening rather than sharing ideas.

Teachers believe that the district office "has an obligation to put me in a situation I can handle" and has certain responsibilities relating to the continuing education of its staff. First:

> I think it is important that it comes from the top, that those controlling the money feel it (inservice) is a valuable activity.

Then, the district office should ensure that the teachers in its schools keep current:

> The district has a responsibility to see teachers grow, especially as a major part of the budget is spent on staff, and therefore it should be willing to help staff grow.
>
> The school and the system have a responsibility to keep the teachers up-to-date.

Teachers have a great need at present for further education:

> The role of the teacher is an expanding one, not just to educate but also the roles of psychologist, program planner, consumerism, extra-curricular activities, they've all been added to the role of the teacher.
>
> After a few years of teaching you lose touch with what's going on, the new ideas in psychology, behavior. I think the school system inservice programs are essential.

Teachers believe that their employer should bear some of the cost of their continuing education:

> The school system has a responsibility to offer to pay part of a teacher's professional development.
>
> When the employer mandates attendance it should be paid-for time.
>
> Companies pay for employees to remain current but education does not.

Despite their criticisms, however, teachers appreciate being given the opportunity to participate in formal inservice activities:

> You have been given a break and even a psychological boost helps. Teachers feel at least an attempt has been made to assist professional growth and they appreciate it.

CATEGORY TWELVE: TEACHERS' COMMENTS RELATING TO INSERVICE EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY

The comments of teachers on the role of the university in their continuing education elicited a variety of responses which revealed their attitude towards the institution that provided their preservice teacher education.

On the one hand, several teachers considered that the university plays a vital role in their professional development. Some reported that they take one university course a year, often in the summer as they find combining a university course with a full-time teaching load too demanding.

> You should definitely go back (to university) from time to time, I probably overdo it. A teacher should remember what it is like to be a student.

As was realistically pointed out:

> It may not be the best body to offer professional development but who else can meet the needs of teachers and organize courses?
>
> The best way for some courses is at university, assuming the professor knows what he is doing.

A few teachers mentioned specific classroom-related benefits that they had obtained recently from taking a university course.

> I'm glad I took computing at the university otherwise I couldn't answer the students' questions.
>
> I took courses at the university in microcomputers as I wanted to be ahead of the student.

> I am taking computer courses and they are very useful ... when I go to my grade six enrichment class I have something I can use.

And, according to one teacher, taking university courses provides benefits other than those arising from course content:

> I think it is really difficult to evaluate how much value courses are. I don't think there's a whole lot that I have found useful in the practical sense that I could take back and use right away. But as a general place to meet people, find out what's happening, broadening your knowledge, then they're very useful.

A desire was expressed for more short extension courses rather than formal courses that are part of a degree program.

> I sometimes wish when I look at the calendar that they had a bit more curriculum-oriented types of courses. If I could just go back and take curriculum courses I would be glad. I have been teaching for 13 years and I don't have any prospects of any more degrees, I am looking for just curriculum, to help me in my job.
>
> I think that short university courses are good. I don't want formal registration, another credit course, but more extension courses.

One teacher suggested that since it was difficult to get teachers to go to university to take a course it would be better to get someone from the university to conduct a course in the school district; but another teacher stated that he preferred to take courses on campus as he enjoyed the change of environment and the opportunity to meet people from other school systems.

Several indicated that they considered the university to be there "for me to use in any way I want."

> I've never gone back to university to upgrade my degree because to this point I have not felt a need. If I wanted to change subjects or grades, I would attend university, indeed I would not think of changing without returning to university.
>
> I don't see university figuring in my professional development unless I wanted to attend a conference, or at a time when I felt I had shot my wad. But if I have to teach, for example, French, then I'd go to university for that kind of information.

Some teachers saw the role of the university simply as that of providing information and speakers:

> The most valuable p.d. day was when I arranged to talk with people at the university.
>
> I see the University as providing people for inservice--people who know the material so well that they can give it to you deeply and simply.
>
> I think of university as being inservice--a one day seminar--and university personnel as resource people.

Others had a less positive image of the university and its role in inservice education. Some saw it as a degree-granting institution and a "salary upgrading place":

> Its role seems to be one of providing certification. You meet very few people in classes who are not there for some certificate or degree.

Others did not even consider it:

> The university doesn't come instantly to mind regarding inservice. I got my degree in 1970 and as far as I'm concerned, it is not going to help me to develop professionally as far as school is concerned as I am going to get curriculum, school stuff here adequately.
>
> The course I'm taking is not helpful; really I don't think the university figures (in inservice education).
>
> I feel absolutely nothing for the university; I look towards others for help.

> I am not prepared to give my time to university courses.

Many comments revealed a negative attitude towards the university which appears to support the survival training mentality that teachers are reported to have towards faculties of education.

> The reason teachers don't like inservice starts at university.
>
> Even teacher education students hate the faculty of education and they are not finished yet.
>
> When I wondered what to do with myself I never thought about going back to university, but I was a good student. I am sure part of it is I don't want to jump through any more hoops.

Yet teachers do overcome their negative feelings:

> For the first eight years of teaching I had no desire for the university to do anything except stay out of my life as I finished the degree with summer school and evening school. The next contact was having student teachers; the original contact I found to be frustrating but the contact now I really enjoy. I think it is excellent, the university coming to teachers saying you can have your choice as to what you want as a cooperating teacher.

Their negative attitude may in part be attributable to the fact that they consider the university to be out-of-touch with what is happening in schools as most professors in the faculty of education do not have recent classroom experience.

> Don't mention university in regard to inservice as it's the ivory tower, it's years since they've been in the classroom. I'd go to university to be brought up-to-date on things in fantasyland.
>
> The university professor is divorced from the classroom and the presentations are fairly useless if you go back with the intent of using these ideas on Monday morning.
>
> Perhaps university people are too far away from the classroom to be of any real concrete value.

> I don't think the university is able to relate to the field.
>
> They're leaders in ideas, not in translating them into practice.

The most frequently made recommendation was that professors in the faculty of education should have recent and regular exposure to the world of the classroom teacher:

> It would be nice if the university still kept its involvement with teachers. One thing that draws it all together is your affiliation with the university. It would be better to have more affiliation between teachers and the university. If some teachers with 10 to 15 years experience, if those teachers could go and show those crazy professors how to teach--many university professors have had only two years of experience teaching and then they're back at university. They're out of touch with the world of the classroom.
>
> My big gripe, even with post-grad courses--they're a real disaster--is that many people in the faculty of education have not been in the classroom for 20 years ... not the same just coming to observe a student teacher. So if you train teachers, after 5 years you should be back in the classroom for one day a week. You have got to teach these people--be responsible for a class--to see what it's like now. Professors have a total misconception of what the classroom is like now; same with administration.

Despite their negative comments, however, many teachers believe that the university should and could play a role in their inservice education.

> Since they (university) are supposed to be the leaders they should be involved in it (inservice). Perhaps then we would get more direct feedback between teachers and the university. We think of 'us' and 'they' but we are in it together.
>
> The university has to take a major role in p.d. as that's where the expertise is and research in all aspects of education and if that's not spread and people know about it, it's not as valuable.
>
> University should be involved in inservice, in theory it should be ... Research papers from the university should be

> translated into classroom practice. They neglect their job if they just report findings ... it's up to them to make me take it away and use it.
>
> I think the university should play more of a role in professional development than it does ... (teachers) don't seem to go just for information, there seems to be a real thing about marks, and adding up and getting a diploma, a pragmatic approach but it leaves you something to think about. Perhaps you should get points (on your employment record) for taking courses and then you would get people taking courses that are of interest to them.

A few believe that teachers have an obligation to help the university:

> The university is a valuable resource. I took an extension course last summer, I didn't want pressure of a credit course, and I was most impressed. I have taken students over there and had student teachers. I believe if we work with it in a good way we can do a lot to guide the university in the way teacher education should go. Teacher educators should get a lot of feedback from teachers in the field. University lecturers should not be out-of-touch with the schools for too long;
> every five years the teacher trainer should be in the field. The onus is on teachers to help university professors to keep current, not vice versa.
>
> I think inservice should be an ongoing thing from one day, year to the next and out-of-classroom professors should use the findings from teachers as they (teachers) are using the materials ... they should use feedback from the teacher to alter the curriculum.

Teachers appear to have almost a love-hate relationship with the university. They have perhaps unrealistically high expectations of what the university can do for them, and then blame it when it does not live up to these expectations. They criticise it vehemently on the one hand and at the same time keep coming back for more. As one perceptive teacher remarked:

> ... but the whole university thing--why do you keep on registering?

Perhaps it is inevitable that the bond between the recent graduate and the university weakens with the passing of time:

> When I was first out of university, I tended to go back to the university for aids and then as I became more confident, the tie to the university became much less and I sought ideas in other areas, such as from publications, other teachers.
>
> Thinking back to my first year I might have thought about going back, saying, "Hey if I got a course in something I'd feel more confident," and I certainly can remember feeling that quite strongly. But now I feel more confident within myself. That first summer I took two courses in language arts and reading but I don't feel that need now.

Also, it is possible that undergraduate students are not yet aware of the need for and the relevance of certain knowledge:

> Certain topics appear to be perceived of more value when offered as a school system inservice than at university; the audience must be able to relate to and have use for the information, if it is to be considered of value.

But it appears that the university could play a more positive and powerful role in developing the preservice-inservice continuum:

> At university (preservice) no one talked to us about inservice, we just saw notices posted. I didn't know if you were supposed to go or not. I went to a couple of Saturday morning sessions and found them quite valuable but wished my friends had been there as I felt inadequate with teachers of eight or ten years' experience. I didn't know what questions to ask. The university should stress attending inservice activities.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this study was to determine teachers' perspectives on inservice education. That the preservice education of teachers should be considered the minimum requirement for entry into the teaching profession has long been acknowledged. At present, the aging and relatively static teacher population, the current knowledge explosion, the rapid rate of technological growth and the rapidly changing lifestyle of many segments of our society all contribute to the necessity of ensuring that teachers are involved in an ongoing program of professional development. Having to cope in his classroom with both the knowledge component of our rapidly changing world and its products places an increasingly heavy burden on today's classroom teacher. In 1950 Mead (1959) recognized the dilemma confronting the classroom teacher, and tremendous changes have occurred in the last three decades. The following passage provides an insight into the complex problems facing the classroom teacher in our society:

> In a more slowly changing society, the good teacher, the _guru_ of India, for instance, is typically old, wise, patient, grown mellow with teaching the young about whom he has learned more and more each year. When the pupils remain the same, the teacher has only to keep alive her capacity for lively observation and response, and each year will add to her wisdom, her understanding, and her gentleness. But the world that the modern teacher confronts is a world in which each year serves, not to reinforce and amplify what she is slowly

> learning about the nature of ten-year-old boys or ten-year-old girls--constancies which will give her something firm on which to base her methods--but serves rather to disorient her. What seemed to be true as she observed the fifth grade five years ago is no longer true; the children's behavior becomes not more predictable--as it should be as she grows more experienced--but less predictable ... each year she understands her children, not more, as she might reasonably expect, but less. A kind of nightmare reversal has been introduced into her life, like an escalator which insists on running backwards; age and experience become not orienting factors but disorienting ones, so that the teacher of twenty years' experience may face her class less confidently than the teacher with only two ... Faced with this unwieldy circumstance that the modern teacher becomes not more, but in a sense, less fitted to teach the longer she teaches, we then, as a society, and particularly as those of our society professionally interested in education, have a problem to solve. How can we set up some pattern which will enable the teacher to grow through the years, instead of becoming stunted and distorted, affrighted by the increasing gap between herself and her pupils, which is not a gap of chronological age but a gap of difference in period? ... now we need a form of in-service training which will permit the teacher to keep abreast of a changing world, to be what she has every right to expect to be--a better, not a worse, teacher with the years ... (there is a) demand for what amounts to be a whole new institution of in-service training, an institution which consciously and delicately corrects for the extraordinary rate of change of the world in which we live (Mead, 1959:31,32,34, 36).

The traditional method of ensuring that teachers keep current is by exposing them to a variety of inservice activities, activities which usually are organized for the teacher by others, occur in a classroom or meeting room, and employ the didactic approach. Unfortunately, as is noted regularly in the literature, teachers appear to view such organized activities with indifference or hostility; and, despite such ongoing activities, educational reform rarely percolates to the level of the classroom, and when it does, the time lag is noticeable because of its length.

In order to combat teachers' inferred indifference to their professional development as indicated by their reluctance to attend inservice education activities arranged for them by others, and their unwillingness, when they do attend, to adopt the information presented at these activities, a variety of solutions has been suggested in the literature. The proposed solutions include involving teachers in the planning stages, conducting needs assessments and manipulating various externals surrounding the activities such as the timing, format and location. The literature is replete with panaceas, none of which appear to have met with success. What the literature assumes, essentially, is that teachers who attend a session will transfer that learning to the classroom and it will be observed in the changed routine of the classroom. What has not been determined are teachers' perspectives on inservice education. Do their conceptions of inservice education agree with what others assume them to be: are they indeed dissatisfied with their present classroom practices and attend activities in order to obtain information which they will use to change their teaching behavior on their return to the classroom; and, even if teachers desire to adopt the information presented at the activity, is it easy to carve out and discard one part of a routine, or to instantly abandon an entire routine and replace it with another; are others truly aware of the nature of life in the classroom and the school?

It was the intent of this study to determine teachers' beliefs and activities in relation to inservice education in order to ascertain if there were common patterns which would permit a greater understanding of the phenomenon of teacher inservice education. It was posited that the assumptions made in the literature may not be accurate and that those organizing and those attending inservice education activities operate from different premises.

The symbolic interactionist perspective guided the research. Teachers' perspectives on inservice education were gathered through the field research strategies of in-depth interviews and participant observation. The major data gathering strategy was a series of arranged but informal in-depth interviews which used an open-ended, semi-structured approach in order to focus the interview yet permit the interviewee to define the situation, structure his account of it and introduce his notions of what he regards as relevant. The researcher also held many casual conversations on the topic with teachers and others in the field of education and was a participant observer at several inservice education activities. The researcher had access to teachers and inservice education activities in two school systems. Over a twelve-month period she conducted 77 arranged interviews with 86 teachers, talked informally with many teachers and with others involved in teacher inservice education and participated in 6 one-day inservice education sessions. Longhand and shorthand notes were used to record the views of participants. In addition, the researcher recorded her own observations and reactions. The general approach to inductive research as outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1965a, 1966, 1967; Glaser, 1978) and the particular coding and category development tactics suggested by Turner (1981) and others were employed. In this approach, the data collection process is guided by the principles of theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation and the constant comparative method. The data were analyzed and grouped into 12 categories (Appendix B, C, D and E). The four elements of a perspective as outlined by Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss (1961:346) guided the organization of the categories and the presentation of the patterns. From these 12 categories patterns emerged which reveal the following shared teachers' conceptions of inservice education.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study reveal that there is not one single perspective on inservice education held by teachers but rather that teachers perceive inservice education to fall into four discrete groups of learning activities each of which they perceive differently. Although the teachers offered a variety of definitions for the terms inservice education and professional development, during the course of the interviews they used the terms interchangeably and included all four groups of activities under the general heading of inservice education. Their decision whether or not to participate, their reasons for participating and their assessment of the value of an activity vary according to the particular group of activities in question. Teachers' shared conceptions of inservice education are portrayed in Figure 1, "A Model of Inservice Education as Perceived by Teachers." As indicated in the model, teachers classify inservice education by types of activities which range from formal activities that are organized for teachers by others and have a nomothetic or institutional orientation to activities at the other end of the spectrum which are of a non-formal, ongoing nature, tend to be individualized and teacher initiated, and have an idiographic orientation.

A MODEL OF INSERVICE EDUCATION AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS

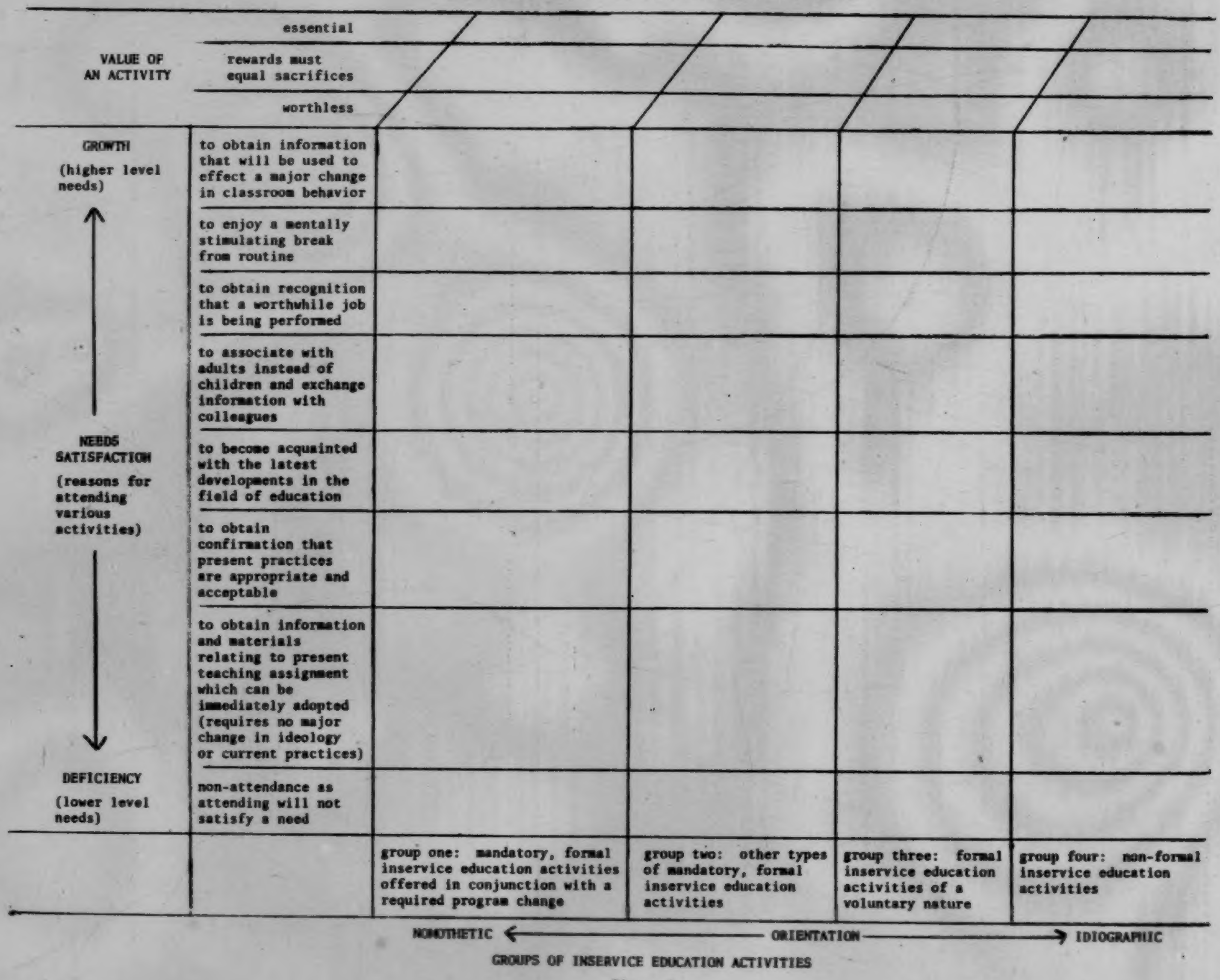
VALUE OF AN ACTIVITY
essential
rewards must equal sacrifices
worthless
GROWTH
(higher level needs)
NEEDS SATISFACTION
(reasons for attending various activities)
DEFICIENCY
(lower level needs)
to obtain information that will be used to effect a major change in classroom behavior
to enjoy a mentally stimulating break from routine
to obtain recognition that a worthwhile job is being performed
to associate with adults instead of children and exchange information with colleagues
to become acquainted with the latest developments in the field of education
to obtain confirmation that present practices are appropriate and acceptable
to obtain information and materials relating to present teaching assignment which can be immediately adopted (requires no major change in ideology or current practices)
non-attendance as attending will not satisfy a need
group one: mandatory, formal inservice education activities offered in conjunction with a required program change
group two: other types of mandatory, formal inservice education activities
group three: formal inservice education activities of a voluntary nature
group four: non-formal inservice education activities
NOMOTHETIC
ORIENTATION
IDIOGRAPHIC
GROUPS OF INSERVICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Figure 1

Teachers participate in activities of both a formal and non-formal nature in order to satisfy certain needs which range from lower level deficiency needs to higher level growth needs. Although participation in an activity may satisfy more than one need, usually there is a dominant need which the teacher desires to have satisfied and which accounts for his attending one activity rather than another. The particular needs of the individual vary, however; a teacher may have considerable expertise in one area and yet be a novice in another. In addition, teachers may attend the same activity in order to have different needs satisfied. The value of a particular inservice education activity is determined by the individual, his needs at that moment in time and whether the activity has satisfied these needs. The findings of the study indicate that there is some consistency in the way teachers perceive the value of different groups of inservice activities. In general, activities are regarded as essential, worthless, or worthwhile if the rewards derived from attending equal or exceed the sacrifices or costs that are incurred by attending.

Following is a synopsis, by groups of activities, of teachers' perspectives on inservice education, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Group One: Mandatory, Formal Inservice Education Activities Offered in Conjunction with a Compulsory Program Change

The first group of activities includes mandatory formal inservice education activities which are offered in conjunction with the introduction of a new program or a compulsory program change. Such activities usually are held during the regular school day and are attended by those who are presently teaching the subject or who will be responsible for the area in the future.

Several of the participants in the study were involved in mandatory, formal social studies inservice education activities organized as part of a department of education inservice project. The comments made by these and other teachers reveal their perspectives on such mandatory, formal activities. It appears that the needs that teachers desire to have satisfied by attending these activities are different from the needs that they desire to have satisfied when they attend other types of inservice education activities. Teachers attend formal inservice education activities offered in conjunction with a compulsory program change in order to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior (whether such a change occurs is outside the scope of this study). Teachers attend other formal inservice education activities in order to have certain needs satisfied, but a desire to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness (the rationale for inservice education cited in the literature) does not appear to be the fundamental reason or need. The attitude of teachers towards these activities is quite different from their attitude towards other formal inservice education activities because they are required to change their present classroom procedures. They consider such activities to be essential if they are to correctly interpret and implement the new program. At these activities they want information and materials presented by classroom teachers with expertise in the area. They believe that such activities should be held during the school day and that those introducing the new program should pay all the costs. They appreciate having their students released from classes when attending the activities.

Thus it appears that only at formal inservice education activities offered in conjunction with a compulsory program change do the goals of the participants coincide with those of the organizers and support the rationale for inservice education cited in the literature, namely that teachers are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and attend the activities in order to change their behavior in the direction recommended at the presentation and so improve their effectiveness in the classroom. Such an assumption appears to be conditional.

Group Two: Other Types of Mandatory, Formal Inservice Education Activities

Included in this category are formal inservice education activities held during the regular school day which the teacher is obligated to attend because students have been released from classes. Such activities include professional development days, teachers' conventions and sessions organized by the school or the school system. There appears to be no particular theme or long-term plan to guide these activities but rather they are offered in a haphazard, piecemeal fashion. Usually the topics are of a 'one of' nature and frequently several topics are offered simultaneously at concurrent sessions and teachers can attend whichever presentation they prefer. For many teachers this discrete, 'one of' lecture or workshop represents the type of formal inservice education activity to which they will be exposed most frequently throughout their teaching career. Since these activities are organized by the school or the school system and are held during the regular school day, all costs are borne by the school system.

Teachers believe that there are many ways in which they can continue their professional education and that attending these formal inservice education activities is but one way. Attending such activities permits teachers to satisfy certain needs. However, unlike the assumptions made in the literature, the dominant need is not a desire for information which will be used to effect a major change in their classroom behavior. Although to organizers who expect to see an overt behavior change result from attendance at formal inservice education activities, the needs identified by teachers may appear to be inconsequential, almost frivolous, and the benefits derived nebulous, to teachers these needs are very important and the satisfaction of them exceeding desirable. Thus such activities are considered to be essential, although teachers would like to see some changes made in their present format. Consequently, although these formal inservice education activities may be considered to be less than successful when judged by the criterion of an overt change in the classroom behavior of teachers, such activities may well be considered eminently successful when judged by the various criteria used by teachers themselves.

Teachers may attend formal inservice education activities that accompany the introduction of a new program to satisfy the following needs, in addition to the need for information that will be used to effect major change in their classroom behavior, but in such instances the need for specific information which will be used to implement the new program appears to be the fundamental need that attending the activity satisfies. Following are the various needs identified by teachers that are satisfied by attending mandatory, formal inservice education activities that do not accompany a compulsory program change. The various needs range from lower level needs of a safety, security and belonging nature that remedy a deficiency to those at a higher level that lead towards achievement of potential and so promote growth.

a. Non-attendance. Some teachers choose not to attend these activities even though they are held during school hours and students have been released from classes. Others attend, but if given a choice, would prefer not to attend. These teachers consider such school days without students to be essential but do not approve of the way in which they days are organized. Suggesting, as the literature does, that conducting needs assessments and involving teachers in the planning stages will ensure that the activities offered address the needs of teachers do not appear to be solutions. Many teachers believe that despite attempts to determine their wishes through some sort of needs assessment, only those activities that district office or the principal considers to be appropriate are offered; and those dissatisfied with the activities organized readily admit that they consider themselves to be too busy to become involved in the planning stages.

Many teachers reported that the topics offered at these activities were repetitious in nature and subject area presentations were at only one level, thus could not cater to the needs of those new in the area and those with considerable experience. Consequently, many teachers appear to outgrow the activities organized for them and thus tend to avoid them because "they have heard it all before." Although teachers do not object to receiving several exposures to the one topic, they do resent being forced to attend presentations they have heard before. Teachers believe that their continuing professional education should be individualized and should address their self-identified needs, not their needs as perceived by others. As adults and professionals, they want the freedom to choose if, what and when to participate in formal inservice education activities. At present they do not have this right, although some teachers take it upon themselves. They believe that on days when students are released from classes they should have the right to engage in whatever learning activities they consider will be most beneficial for them and their students. They do not want to be forced to attend activities that the organizers consider to be appropriate. In particular, they want unstructured professional development days, that is days without students and without mandatory formal inservice education activities. They are aware, however, of the delicate political position of the school board and the public dislike of cancelled classes and consequently they believe that the school board should make the public aware of the need for and various forms of teacher continuing education. In particular the public should become acquainted with the fact that professional development can occur through involvement with non-formal, as well as formal inservice education. Perhaps then district offices would not feel compelled to organize group activities in schools to reassure the public that teachers are indeed working.

Other teachers, however, believe that there should be some mandatory, formal inservice education activities as there is a natural human tendency to avoid certain situations even though it is known that benefits will result from participation. Most of the teachers interviewed in the course of the study indicated that attending these mandatory activities permits them to satisfy needs in the affective domain and consequently they will attend activities which they consider to be of dubious educational value. Their needs are satisfied regardless of the appropriateness of the topic or presenter. However, although it is very important to have needs in the affective domain satisfied, it is desirable to organize activities that permit the satisfaction of both cognitive and affective needs.

Unfortunately, neither teachers, their employers, nor their professional association appear to have a plan for teacher growth, nor are activities offered which deliberately cater to the different needs of teachers at various stages in their careers. This lack of a comprehensive professional development plan may help account for non-attendance at formal activities. Currently, activities are offered in a haphazard, piecemeal and band-aid fashion, addressing immediate areas of concern, or new trends, in isolation from one another. Yet the teachers included in this study have indicated that their inservice education needs follow an identifiable pattern which changes over time, a pattern which is consistent with the literature on adult development. Many noted that the activities they consider of value at this stage in their career differ from the activities they considered worthwhile earlier in their career. At the beginning of their career, most teachers feel insecure and overwhelmed and desire formal inservice education activities that will help them cope with their present teaching assignment. As they become more experienced, they gain in confidence and knowledge and often prefer more thought-provoking and stimulating topics. However, whenever they make a subject or grade change, or are promoted, in the new area they tend to function once again as a neophyte. Too, the type of presentation desired varies according to the time of year. At certain times of the year teachers desire stimulating presentations which will revive and rejuvenate them whereas at other times of the year subject matter presentations are preferred. Consequently, different types and levels of presentations are required to reflect the changing needs of teachers, particularly at present when there is a static and aging teacher population. Until such a plan is implemented, it appears probable that the tendency for many teachers to avoid formal inservice education activities will continue.

b. To obtain information and materials relating to present teaching assignment which can be immediately adopted (requires no major change in ideology or current practices). Teachers attend these activities in order to obtain information and materials which they can use on their return to the classroom. Although teachers indicated that they do not attend these formal inservice activities because they are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and seek information which they will use to effect a major behavior change, they are constantly seeking new material which they can use on their return to the classroom to enliven their present classroom practices. At these sessions teachers want practical, classroom-related presentations that provide them with new ideas, techniques and behaviors which they can put into practice immediately and which use materials currently in their schools. They prefer presentations given by someone who is or was until recently a classroom teacher and who understands the realities of classroom life, and small group, hands-on activities that permit them to become involved. Also, they want handouts as such take-away information greatly enhances the likelihood of their using the information presented. The foregoing preferences are compatible with teachers' views on the difficulty of introducing change into classrooms and schools. The information received at this type of presentation adds variety to present classroom practices but does not entail a great amount of preparation time or a fundamental change in ideology or current classroom practices. Such ideas are easy to adopt compared to the changes that accompany the introduction of a new reading program or an approach to discipline that is incompatible with that used by other teachers in the school. The approval with which teachers view handouts no doubt stems from their usefulness in reminding teachers of these new ideas as the timing of the presentation does not necessarily coincide with the teaching of the topic.

c. To obtain confirmation that present classroom practices are appropriate and acceptable. It has been documented that teachers accept the findings of educational research that are neutral or confirm present practices, otherwise findings tend to be ignored (Clifford, 1973:27). The same appears to be true for formal inservice presentations; teachers seek confirmation at such presentations that present practices are appropriate, not new behaviors. Teachers appear to have very fragile self-concepts which need to be bolstered. Consequently, they want positive presentations which enhance their self-concept by reassuring them of the suitability of their present classroom behavior; they do not seek new information which would necessitate a major change in their present behavior. This finding contradicts the assumption that is implicit in attempts at educational reform, namely that teachers are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and seek information which will cause them to change their behavior. It is posssible that this false premise helps to explain why attempts at educational reform have been less than successful. Teachers indicate that unless they are in a crisis situation which necessitates an immediate change in their classroom behavior, they will not adopt a new approach, even if they consider it to have merit. They seek minor, superficial changes which require little preplanning or alteration in their present approaches.

Condemning teachers, however, for not attending formal inservice activities with the intent of adopting the information presented is not a stance that should be taken lightly. The literature, in making this assumption about teachers, appears to disregard what is known about schools and those who staff them. As the review of the literature points out, schools are loosely coupled, bureaucratic systems given to dynamic conservatism and staffed by individuals who function independently, or at least with a great deal of freedom. The energy of the teacher is channelled into maintaining order, controlling events and responding to the thousands of stimuli that daily bombard him. The teacher desires an orderly, disciplined environment which permits him to get done that which he has got to do. Consequently, little energy is left over for introducing innovations. Even teachers who desire to adopt an innovative approach indicate that they wait until "next time around." As the literature states, and the teachers here support, teachers are so overburdened that asking them to do one more thing is asking too much. Thus given the inflexible school day and year, the fixed quota of tasks that must be performed and the difficulty of determining the effectiveness of the teaching-learning situation, it is not surprising that teachers seek inservice education activities that confirm that their present practices are appropriate and acceptable and provide them with information that will enable them to add a little variety to existing classroom practices. Indeed, it could be suggested that for mental health reasons teachers desire and need such information.

The comments made by teachers relating to the difficulty of introducing a major change into a school supports the statements made in the literature. In the first place, it is almost impossible for one teacher to bring about a change in another unless that person perceives there to be a need to change. In the second place, district office, although responsible for organizing formal inservice education activities, does not necessarily facilitate the introduction of change. As the teachers included in the study pointed out, the greater the number of teachers who are aware of and support a desired change, the greater the likelihood of change occurring. Yet the present approach is for district offices to send one person from each school to participate in an activity which is promoting the introduction of a major change and expect that teacher to persuade the other teachers in his school, teachers who have not been exposed to the presentation, to adopt the desired innovation. Small wonder that even when a teacher believes that adopting an innovation would be desirable, the innovation fizzles out at the school level.

d. To become acquainted with the latest developments in the field of education. Teachers wish to keep current and desire presentations which will expose them to new knowledge in the field of education, even if they are aware that probably they will not change their behavior in the manner recommended at the presentation.

However, although they attend formal inservice education activities with the intent of finding out what is new but not with the intent of adopting the new knowledge, they are open to the seeds of a new idea being sown, but they want the idea to germinate and come to fruition if and when they decide that the idea is acceptable and the timing appropriate. If they do adopt the new behavior, usually it is after they have been exposed to the concept on several occasions over an extended period of time. They believe that the decision to incorporate the new behavior into their repertoire should be theirs.

The finding that teachers attend formal inservice education activities with the intent of becoming acquainted with innovations, but not of immediately adopting them, is compatible with what is known about adult development. Given the declining teacher population and the increasing age of teachers, a growing number of teachers are in the middle years. It is known that at this stage in adult development, adults have many life commitments, including attachments to work, property, civic affairs, and the extended family. Such knowledge permits an understanding of the locked-in character of much of adult life which can manifest itself in, for example, an unwillingless to introduce change because of far-reaching repercussions which can dislocate the existing order of life. Consequently, changes of a superficial nature are more appealing and most likely to be introduced. As teachers indicated, more fundamental changes have to be thought about for some period of time before being adopted. All individuals desire to make sense of their world and thus there is a very human tendency to reject that which upsets our world or to modify it so as to make it compatible with our world. This takes less energy than altering our world to agree with the new information. Also, in adulthood there is a tendency towards the law of least effort, the convenient road of repetition.

In addition, given what is known about the nature and motives of innovators, it is possible that the rejection of certain innovations is appropriate. Perhaps teachers, by slowing accumulating and assimilating new ideas and then gradually introducing change when they consider the approach and the timing to be appropriate, are behaving in an acceptable manner, one befitting professionals.

e. To associate with adults instead of children and exchange information with colleagues. The isolation of the classroom teacher appears to be a cause for great concern to teachers. Attending mandatory formal inservice activities ensures that teachers will obtain a much needed mental health break from the regimented world of the school and the isolation of the classroom. Teachers need an opportunity to associate with adults instead of children and to exchange information with fellow educators, in particular with those who are in the same area of specialization. In addition, attending such activities reminds them that they belong to a profession. The feeling of isolation and the need for contacts with colleagues is supported by the comments of teachers who are the only subject specialists in their schools. These teachers are deprived of ongoing, daily contacts with others who have the same area of specialization and attending formal inservice education activities gives these teachers an opportunity to associate with one another, an opportunity which otherwise might not occur. Unfortunately, these teachers believe that even at formal inservice education activities they are neglected. Often activities relating to their subject area are not offered because of the small number of teachers involved; group activities tend to cater to the needs of the majority.

Teachers want there to be sufficient time at formal activities to permit them to indulge in activities of a social nature as they consider such contacts to be meaningful and essential, and for some teachers the main need that attending activities satisfies. Many activities, however, appear to be organized in a manner which accidentally or deliberately precludes such interactions from occurring.

f. To obtain recognition that a worthwhile job is being performed. Teachers suffer from a lack of feedback concerning the importance and effectiveness of their performance. Positive presentations which concentrate on their strengths not on their weaknesses are sought. Such presentations give them a mental pat on the back, supply the desired recognition and encourage them to return to the classroom and persevere with their teaching load. They dislike negative presentations which they consider to be a threat. It could be conjectured that this need for recognition is an outgrowth of their isolation in the classroom and the difficulty in assessing teacher effectiveness. There is no gauge that they can apply to reassure themselves that they are doing a good job. Yet paradoxically, as one teacher pointed out, teachers crave recognition but dislike having others watch them perform.

g. To enjoy a mentally stimulating break from routine. It is difficult for teachers to escape mentally or physically from the confines of their classroom. Inspiring, thought-provoking presentations permit teachers to extend their mental horizons beyond the four walls of their classroom and helps them keep their classroom and its concerns in perspective. At these activities, teachers want to be stimulated mentally and to receive what they term a shot in the arm which will revive and rejuvenate them so that they return to their classrooms refreshed and encouraged to continue with their present teaching load.

Group Three: Formal Inservice Education Activities of a Voluntary Nature

Formal inservice education activities of a voluntary nature usually are organized by the school, the school system, the specialist councils of the teachers' professional association or the university and may be held during school hours, in the evening, at the weekend or during school holidays. When such activities are scheduled during the school day, usually a teacher who wishes to attend is released from classes for the duration of the activity and his place is taken by a substitute teacher. Otherwise such activities are held outside of school hours and the teacher attends in his leisure time. The criterion teachers use to determine if they should attend such activities is "Will the rewards equal the sacrifices?". In other words, the benefits that arise from attending these activities must compensate for the costs incurred by attending. If the activity is held during the school day, the sacrifices or costs incurred are all the work that having a substitute teacher entails, and the loss of teaching time with students. If the activity does not provide them with the anticipated rewards, they suffer feelings of guilt because they consider that they have deprived their students unnecessarily of valuable teaching time. Consequently, if they consider the activity to be of doubtful value, often they prefer not to attend but rather to stay in school and teach. If the activity is held outside of the regular school day, attending means that they must forego part of their leisure time and they want reassurance that the benefits derived from attending compensate for the loss of personal life.

For this group of activities, teachers do not believe that benefits will accrue regardless of the topic or presenter, as they do for mandatory formal inservice education activities held during school hours when students are released from classes. When depriving students of teaching time or foregoing part of their leisure time, they want a guarantee that their reasons for attending will be satisfied. Although teachers may attend these activities in order to have any of the needs listed in Figure 1 satisfied, frequently they attend these activities in order to obtain information and materials which will help them with their present teaching assignment, particularly when the activities are held outside of the regular school day, week or year. It is possible that when such activities encroach on their leisure time, the desire to satisfy needs of a social nature are not as strong as in order to attend teachers must forego part of their own social life. As was mentioned previously, teachers, especially those in their middle years, have many life commitments and thus are reluctant to use their own time to attend job-related activities as in order to do so they must neglect their non-professional commitments. Both male and female teachers indicated that they have other interests apart from their profession which they must take into consideration when deciding if they should attend activities held after school hours.

Teachers would prefer to have all formal inservice education activities held within the regular school day because they believe that they do not have the time or energy to participate in activities held outside of the normal teaching day. Thus they resent being asked to attend activities which are held after school, at the weekend, or during school holidays. Although they will attend such activities if they can be guaranteed that the rewards will equal the sacrifices, they would like their employer to pay at least a part, if not all of any costs incurred by attending. That teachers believe that they do not have the time or energy to attend activities held out of school hours agrees with McClusky's (1973) concept of margin. He considers that a necessary condition for learning is the availability of what he calls margin, that is surplus power or energy left over after a person has handled his load. Given society's never-ending expectations of the educational system, the knowledge explosion and the increasing number of teachers who are in their middle years, it is not surprising that many teachers believe that by the end of the school day, week or year they do not have any surplus energy for formal inservice education activities held out of school hours.

Group Four: Non-Formal Inservice Education Activities

Non-formal inservice education activities are ongoing, often casual involvements which can occur at any time and in any location and which usually are teacher initiated and involve an individual teacher or a small group of colleagues. The most-frequently cited non-formal activities are daily in-school contacts with colleagues, reading professional literature, involvement with a new program, having student teachers and watching others teach, and choosing extra-curricular activities that have spin-off to the classroom. Teachers indicated that they regularly use non-formal inservice education activities to keep current, obtain additional classroom-related information and find solutions to classroom-related problems. It is from involvement in such activities, not formal inservice education activities, that teachers obtain information which they will use to effect changes in their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness. Since participation in these activities directly affects their classroom behavior, teachers consider involvement in such activities to be at a minimum worthwhile, if not essential.

The non-formal activity which the teachers consider contributes most to the furtherance of their professional development and assists them with their subject and classroom-related areas of concern is daily in-school contacts with colleagues, in particular with those colleagues who share a similar teaching assignment. The importance that teachers accord to these interactions is revealed by the comments of teachers who are the only subject specialists in their schools. These teachers consider themselves to be deprived of meaningful exchanges with colleagues who have the same areas of interest and consider this deprivation to be a serious cause for concern. Attending formal inservice education activities permits these teachers to associate with others who have similar areas of specialization and so helps to reduce their feeling of isolation but such contacts are not frequent enough to compensate for the lack of ongoing, daily contacts that teachers in more prevalent subject areas enjoy and benefit from. Involvement in other non-formal activities is considered to be important and to generate worthwhile benefits that have definite spin-off to the classroom. As a result of their involvement in non-formal inservice education activities, an involvement which occurs when the teacher considers there to be a need, teachers obtain information which they can use to change their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness in a non-threatening manner from individuals who they consider to have credibility.

The importance that teachers accord to non-formal inservice education activities in furthering their professional development does not appear to be appreciated in the literature nor by those involved in inservice education who appear to judge teachers' commitment to the continuation of their professional education by their attendance at formal inservice education activities and their behavior upon returning to the classroom. It is suggested that because non-formal activities are teacher initiated and unobtrusive in character, their importance has not yet been recognized. Rarely are such activities facilitated or funded, yet teachers consider them to be essential activities which contribute to their mental health and sense of well-being as well as to maintaining or improving their effectiveness in the classroom. Involvement in non-formal activities satisfies all of the needs listed in Figure 1, but, and perhaps even more importantly, permits teachers to satisfy these needs whenever, wherever and however they consider most appropriate. Formal inservice education activities as presently organized have a nomothetic or institutional orientation and tend to violate the known principles of adult learning and development whereas non-formal activities, which teachers value highly, have an idiographic orientation and subscribe to these principles.

Conclusion

It is probable that as long as activities are organized for teachers by others there will be a goal mismatch between that of organizers and participants, except in regard to mandatory formal inservice education activities which accompany the introduction of a compulsory program change. Others no doubt will continue to organize formal activities based on the assumption that teachers are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and will try to improve teacher effectiveness by attempting to bring about what they, but not necessarily teachers, consider to be desirable overt behavior changes, and teachers, no doubt, will continue to attend formal activities in order to satisfy the needs identified in the study. Formal inservice education activities, however, can improve their contribution to teacher continuing education. They can be organized in a manner that acknowledges and provides for individual as well as subject area differences, that ensures that teachers have choice, not only choice among activities offered but also the choice of whether or not to attend; that involves teachers not relegates them to passive observer roles, and that recognizes that they bring to sessions valuable knowledge and experience. There should be a plan for teacher continuing education that takes into consideration the development stages of adults, the principles of adult learning and the nature and pattern of teachers' professional needs and that includes all of the parties involved in teacher professional development, namely the individual, his employer, his professional association and the university. The nature and importance of non-formal as well as formal inservice education activities should be reflected in the plan and teachers should be encouraged and rewarded for participation in both types of activities throughout their career in education.

It is interesting to note that school systems traditionally put their money, time and energy into organizing formal inservice education activities and give little encouragement to, ignore, or seem to desire to sabotage teachers' attempts at involvement in non-formal activities. Given the findings of this study, it appears that through involvement in non-formal activities teachers are attaining the goal, that is improving their classroom effectiveness, that others have accorded to formal activities, which teachers attend for other reasons. If teachers are to be the beneficiaries of inservice education, it cogently could be argued that it is their perspective that should determine the nature of inservice education.

THE LITERATURE REVISITED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Literature Revisited

In an inductive study such as this, it is essential that the literature be revisited once the data collection and analysis phase has been completed and the patterns have emerged in order to ascertain if the findings of the study are in agreement with or refute the assumptions made in the literature. Glaser (1978:32) recommends leaving the review of the literature until the data collection phase is nearing completion, but many researchers, particularly those using this approach for the first time, feel more comfortable and confident if they have some knowledge of the writings in the area before commencing the field research phase of the study.

Upon revisiting the literature, it quickly became apparent to the researcher that, as has been noted in Chapter II, although a great deal has been written on the topic, the treatment of the topic tends to be of a superficial nature. Even though several writers bewail the lack of soundly conceived research and theory development, they apparently do not feel compelled to fill the void, at least not with anything more substantial than their beliefs regarding what they consider to be wrong with inservice education and what they think should be done to remedy what they perceive to be the deficiencies. The findings of the study suggest that writers have imposed their perception of inservice education upon teachers, even those who make a deliberate attempt not to do so. Many articles could be cited to support the statement that the literature on inservice education is premised on inaccurate assumptions concerning the beliefs and activities of teachers but only a couple will be used to illustrate the point, a point that the research could not have made before collection and analyzing the data and which makes a second visit to the literature essential.

When discussing inservice education, the writers equate inservice education with formal, organized activities, in particular with workshops, and the ineffectiveness of much of inservice education is attributed to the delivery systems used. It is believed that if only the right formula can be found, the quality of schools will be improved; and so many suggest models. The findings of the study indicate that the assumptions upon which the models are based are inaccurate. Mohan and Hull (1975:43), for example, recommend a model based on the following assumptions:

> (the participant) has come to the workshop with a readiness to learn what is being offered in the inservice program ... is an informed individual who is not interested in general information.

Although the foregoing assumptions will be true for some participants at some activities, particularly for those attending formal activities which accompany a compulsory program change, the findings of the study suggest that these are not assumptions that should be made about the participants attending the majority of formal inservice education activities. Dawson (1978), on the other hand, makes some assumptions which are compatible with the findings of this study:

> Each teacher, each administrator, each resource person is not only a product of the external reality which s/he operates, but is also a creator of that reality (49) ... in-service education activities which are imposed on teachers from above ... are destined for failure if they do not take into account the teachers' perception of reality (50) ... in-service education, to be successful, to have permanent lasting effects on teachers and subsequently on their students, has to be generated dynamically by the classroom teachers themselves, from their view of classroom reality (Dawson, 1978:51).

He considers that there is not one best model for inservice education but suggests four possible formulas. However, his recommended activities for the most part are held outwith the regular school day and involve formal inservice education activities organized for teachers by others. Although he notes that "during breaks between sessions, teachers can be observed in animated conversation about educational issues" (Dawson, 1978:53), he does not appear to want to capitalize on such interactions nor does he consider that such interactions can have spin-off into the classroom. He talks disparagingly about 'one-shot, one time only sessions,' yet such sessions provide teachers with opportunities to indulge in the previously noted conversations with colleagues. And he makes the point that although inservice education activities should take into account teachers' perceptions of reality, he is not advocating "self-training by teachers using only their own resources. Nothing is further from the truth" (Dawson, 1978:54). Thus Dawson (1978), despite his affirmation to the contrary, still appears to perceive of inservice education as formal activities imposed on teachers by others. Even new texts rolling off the press, their covers extolling 'their solution' as 'the answer' to inservice education equate inservice education with formal activities organized for teachers.

A popular solution at present, highly touted in the literature, is to transfer the organization of inservice education to the school level with the principal as the in-school leader, in other words a variation of school-based staff development. Yet from the interviews conducted during the course of this study, neither the teachers, administrators nor the teachers' professional association appear to subscribe to this role for the principal, preferring the collegial model with the principal as facilitator. Although there is a great deal of on-going, informal sharing and exchanging within schools, it is not a part of a program deliberately fostered by principals.

After reading the literature one might be tempted to ask: if organized attempts at educational reform are noted for their failure, if teachers do not attend formal inservice education activities or attend them reluctantly, seem more interested in the social aspects than the presentation and do not adopt the new behaviors on their return to the classroom, does this mean that teachers make no attempt to maintain or improve their effectiveness in the classroom? The findings of this study suggest that teachers do take measures to ensure that their students receive the best learning experiences possible; they do seek answers to areas of concern; they do seek information which will help them remedy areas of deficiency; they do attempt to keep abreast of the latest developments in education. But, they do not necessarily do so in the manner that those writing about inservice education assume that they should and would, that is by attending formal inservice education activities and immediately on their return to the classroom changing their behavior in the manner recommended at the activity. Teachers are adults and professionals who function as relatively autonomous individuals in loosely coupled organizations. Consequently it should not be surprising to discover that they continue their professional development through their involvement in a variety of activities of both a formal and non-formal nature, depending on what they consider will best satisfy their self-identified needs at a particular time.

Following is a summary of the discrepancies revealed on the second visit to the literature between what the literature assumes to be teachers' perspectives on inservice education, and their perspectives as identified by teachers themselves.

-- Inservice education in the literature generally is equated with workshops and lecture-type presentations whereas the findings of this study reveal that teachers include a variety of formal and non-formal activities under the heading of inservice education. Given that workshops are a viable and frequently used method of acquainting teachers with certain information, the extensive body of literature on the topic is of value to those who wish to organize such activities.

-- When formal inservice education activities accompany a compulsory program change, it appears that the goals of the organizer and of participants are in accord and agree with the assumptions made in the literature. Teachers attend such activities in order to acquire information which they will use to change their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness. Otherwise there is a mismatch between the goals of organizers and those of participants. The teachers included in the study indicate that they attend formal inservice education activities which do not accompany a compulsory program change for the reasons identified in Figure 1, but not because they are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and wish to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their behavior on their return to the classroom, the traditional reason for organizing such activities.

-- It is assumed in the literature that all change is improvement and that teachers attend formal inservice education activities because they are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and wish to improve their effectiveness by adopting the information presented on their return to the classroom.

The findings of this study suggest otherwise. The teachers included in the study indicate that they do not seek information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior but rather seek confirmation that their present practices are appropriate and acceptable. They change their classroom behavior in crisis situations only, or when compelled to do so because of curriculum changes.

-- The literature speaks disparagingly of 'one-of' and awareness-level presentations but such sessions can satisfy the needs identified by teachers in Figure 1.

-- In the literature the criterion employed to determine the effectiveness of a formal inservice activity is a change in the overt behavior of the teacher on his return to the classroom. The literature does not consider that there may be a goal mismatch between that of organizers and participants and that although an activity may be considered unsuccessful given the criterion used by organizers, it may be considered successful given the criterion used by participants who came in order to satisfy some of the needs identified in Figure 1.

-- Although some of the literature acknowledges the socio-political realities of teaching which make the introduction of a major change difficult, rarely is the difficulty of changing one part of a routine, or the practice of delaying a change until 'next time around' considered.

-- The literature does not consider that teachers may need several exposures, over time, to an innovation before they consider adopting it.

-- Often it is assumed in the literature that because teachers are reluctant to attend formal inservice education activities they are not participating in inservice education. The teachers included in this study indicate that they use non-formal inservice education activities, which they consider to be very important, to obtain information which they will use to maintain or improve their effectiveness in the classroom.

-- The literature presupposes that there is a corps of trained presenters available. Teachers point out the difficulty of getting competent presenters and their high regard for presenters who are classroom teachers and thus familiar with the realities of life in the classroom.

-- Although the literature acknowledges the isolation of the classroom teacher, it does not consider that the need for contacts with colleagues may be a legitimate reason for organising an activity.

-- The literature assumes that teachers will be involved in large-scale innovation projects, in-school staff development programs and long-term inservice activities with a particular theme. It dismisses 'one-of' activities as ineffective, yet these are the types of activities to which the majority of teachers will be exposed most frequently throughout their career. Instead of beginning with what is, and basing its suggestions on that, the literature begins with the ideal and bases its models on that.

-- Although conducting needs assessments and involving teachers in the planning of activities are two basic recommendations made in the literature for improving the effectiveness of inservice activities, in practice these tend to be token gestures which degenerate into asking teachers to rank a list of topics or write suggestions on a blank sheet of paper, and having a couple of teachers sit on a planning committee. Although critical of many of the inservice activities offered, teachers readily admit that they consider themselves to be too busy to become more involved in the organization of such activities.

-- Although both formal and non-formal activities may be included by a writer in his definition of inservice education, the tendency is for the writer to ignore the non-formal activities and to concentrate on formal activities of the workshop or lecture-type presentation. Teachers, however, indicate that it is through their involvement in non-formal activities that they obtain information which they use to change their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness. Thus the goal that writers and researchers assume is being met by teacher participation in formal activities is to a large extent being met through teacher involvement in non-formal activities.

-- The findings of this study do support a large body of literature, namely that on adult development and learning, the concerns of teachers, the nature of professional learning and adults' motives for participation in learning activities.

This vast body of literature, however, appears to have been ignored by most of those writing on inservice education.

-- In the literature on inservice education, little attention is paid to the role of the university other than a few recommendations of a general nature relating to the types of courses that should be offered. This low level of interest is supported by the findings of the study. Teachers tend to view the university as a degree- granting, salary upgrading institution. In general, when teachers desire assistance with classroom-related areas of concern they turn to others, not to the institution which gave them their pre-service training, as they consider university professors to be out of touch with the world of the classroom teacher.

-- The role of the school system also receives scant attention in the literature. Teachers, however, referred to their district office repeatedly during the interviews. It is conjectured that the role of the school system in the inservice education of teachers has not received sufficient attention. Teachers' immediate inservice education needs are related to their current teaching assignment which is determined by their employer, the school system.

-- The literature does not appear to be aware of the belief of teachers that they do not have the time or energy to participate in formal inservice education activities held outside of the regular school day, week or year. Repeatedly writers suggest holding activities after school, at the weekend or during the school holidays.

-- The traditional method of evaluating the effectiveness of an inservice activity is by determining if there has been an overt change in the classroom behavior of the participants. The findings of this study indicate that many of the benefits derived from attending formal activities are of an intangible nature and therefore traditional methods of evaluation may not be appropriate.

Thus the literature on inservice, while lamenting the lack of educational reform at the classroom level, keeps on advocating more of the same, in a slightly different format, based on the same old assumptions. This, essentially, is the same as talking more slowly or more loudly to a person who does not understand one's language; no matter how one alters the externals, the basic cause of lack of understanding remains. Similarly with inservice education, as long as the goals of the organizers and the goals of the participants continue to mismatch, the formal activities offered will be considered to be less than effective from both viewpoints. The term inservice education conjures up a quite different picture to each group and until organizers and writers understand the language of the participants, there will be a lack of communication.

A Suggestions for School Systems

Marker (1982:8) states that:

> Every major (education report) of recent years ... has pointed to deficiencies and looked to inservice for remedies without giving any indication of how the inservice system might be reorganized and strengthened to provide them.

Although it is beyond the scope of this study to suggest ways of reorganizing inservice education, the researcher would like to refer to one inservice project the underlying assumptions of which are in agreement with the findings of this study. This is not an attempt to reorganize inservice education because, as Marker (1982:14) states, "as long as the education service continues to be the untidy business it is, there can be no neat solutions," but rather a suggestion as to how a school system can capitalize on teachers' perceptions of inservice education. School systems have a vested interest in ensuring that their teachers continue their professional education and in obtaining some identifiable return for their investment in time, energy and money in inservice education. The approach about to be suggested would be but one part of a larger scheme which would include mandatory formal activities of the type currently offered but reorganized to include both formal and non-formal activities and permit teachers to satisfy their self-identified needs. Specific suggestions will be made in the section entitled 'Recommendations.'

The program in question is called IMPACT II (Mann, 1982) and is an experimental teacher-to-teacher network aimed at changing the nature of classroom innovation through a voluntary network which endeavors to change individuals, not schools. In this approach, which has proven to be effective in the city of New York, the teacher does not have to persuade other colleagues in the school to change, and involvement is voluntary, not imposed from without. The program is relatively simple: one group of teachers, the developers, is used to reach another group of less accomplished teachers, the replicators. The teachers who seek to refine a classroom innovation receive 'developer' funds of $300 and the teachers who wish to try out the innovation receive 'replicator' grants of $200. It was found that the program caters to the different needs of teachers at different stages in their careers; the replicators were younger, less experienced and less confident than the developers. The program encouraged teachers to recruit other teachers, who regarded the recruiters as "credible, reliable sources of help because they, too, spent 'six hours and 20 minutes a day with kids, kids, kids' " (Mann, 1982:614).

The approach to inservice education described in IMPACT II capitalizes on an important finding of this study and a study by Holdaway and Millikan (1980), namely that in-school consultation with colleagues contributes to the professional growth of teachers and the alleviation of their concerns.

As a result of their involvement in IMPACT II, teachers reported the satisfaction of certain needs which also were identified by the teachers included in this study (Mann, 1982):

-- They obtained professional fulfilment.
-- They were able to meet with other teachers which helped to reduce their isolation.
-- They had the opportunity to be trained and to train others.
-- They were able to visit other schools and be visited.
-- They were able to publish their ideas.
-- They received recognition.
-- Their feelings of collegiality were fostered.
-- Their attitude towards teaching improved.
-- They received a little money for extra classroom materials.

This program represents a non-formal inservice education activity which is compatible with teachers' perspectives on inservice education.

Recommendations for School Systems

Following are recommendations for school systems, based on the findings of the study, which will enable them to offer the teachers in their employment inservice education learning experiences which are in agreement with teachers' perspectives on inservice education.

-- The district office of the school system should acquaint the public with the nature of and need for teacher professional development. In particular the public should be made aware of the fact that teachers are involved in ongoing continuing education experiences throughout the year and that many of the activities which contribute to an improvement in the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom and thus the learning experiences of students are of a non-formal, often apparently social nature. In addition, the public should be made aware of the fact that teachers spend a great deal of their own time and money in furthering their professional development in order to ensure that students obtain the best classroom experiences possible. Also, the public must realize that on days when students are released from classes, teachers are working and can be engaged in learning experiences that directly benefit students without attending group activities held in local schools.

-- Since teachers believe that the school system has a responsibility to prepare teachers for their teaching assignments, the school system should pay any costs incurred by teachers who attend inservice education activities that directly relate to current teaching assignments.

-- When introducing compulsory program changes, the school system and/or the department of education should ensure that such program changes are accompanied by formal inservice education activities held during the school day, preferably with students released from classes. The presentations should be given by classroom teachers with expertise in the area who can help teachers interpret and implement the new curriculum and can suggest appropriate teaching materials.

-- All formal inservice education activities should be held within the school day, week and year. The school system should organize such activities or should permit teachers to attend such activities organized by others. Part, if not all, of the cost should be borne by the school system.

-- The formal inservice education activities organized for teachers should include the following types of presentations:

a. Practical, classroom-related types of presentations preferably given by those with recent classroom experience in the area. The ideas presented should be capable of being immediately adopted by the teacher on his return to the classroom and should require only those materials that are presently available in the schools. The preferred format for such activities is small group, hands-on activities which permit teachers to become involved and share ideas with other participants. Handouts are appreciated as they remind teachers of the information presented.

b. Information sessions that acquaint teachers with the latest developments in the field of education.

c. Positive, stimulating, thought-provoking presentations that enhance teachers' self-concept. Such presentations may relate directly to the field of education or may be of a more general nature.

-- Since in any group of teachers there will be those who are novices in an area and those with a great deal of experience, subject matter presentations should be offered at a variety of levels to cater to the different needs of teachers at different stages in their careers.

-- Since teachers have indicated their preference for presenters who are classroom teachers and pointed out the lack of qualified presenters, the school system should encourage and reward, in some way, those teachers who express an interest in giving occasional presentations and who are considered to have the necessary expertise. It is suggested that these rewards need not necessarily be of a financial nature but could take the form of release time, recognition, reimbursement for expenditures, and so forth.

-- It is suggested that the school system should not rely too heavily on imported speakers who have no knowledge of the local scene but simply give a prepared presentation and leave.

-- When organizing activities, the school system should take the time of year into consideration. Teachers have indicated that at certain times of the year they prefer more subject-oriented presentations whereas at other times of the year they desire thought-provoking, mentally stimulating presentations.

-- Formal inservice education activities should be organized in a manner which encourages interactions of a social nature.

-- The importance of non-formal inservice education activities should be acknowledged by the school system.

-- Teachers, as professional and adult learners, desire inservice education activities of a formal and non-formal nature which meet their self-identified needs. The school system should permit and encourage teachers to participate in both kinds of activities.

-- Teachers should have the freedom to choose if, what, and when to participate in formal and non-formal inservice education activities. In particular, on school days when students are released from classes, they should have the freedom to participate in whatever types of activities they consider will best benefit both themselves as professionals and their students.

-- The school system should have a long-term plan for teacher professional growth so that the activities offered follow and support a theme, rather than, as tends to occur at present, be a series of disconnected offerings. The weakness of a 'one of' offering is not so much the fact that it is only one presentation on a topic but rather the fact that the single presentation has nothing whatsoever to do with the previous or the next presentation.

-- If the school system wishes to have teachers adopt an innovation, the following suggestions should be taken into consideration:

a. Teachers must be exposed to the innovation on several occasions over an extended period of time in order to permit them to become acquainted with and accept the innovation.

b. The school system must not only expose teachers to the innovation but also must facilitate the adoption of the innovation.

c. The school system must expose the entire school to the innovation. The present practice of sending only one representative from each school to the activity should be discontinued.

d. The school system must realize that usually teachers do not adopt an innovation until 'next time around', thus the timing of the exposure to the innovation is important.

e. It is easier to adopt an innovation if one does not have to persuade others in the school also to change.

-- Since teachers have indicated that they have no time and little interest in being involved in planning formal inservice education activities, the present practice of offering concurrent sessions is an appropriate way of attempting to meet the needs of different groups of teachers. When organizing such activities, it should be remembered that teachers desire not only different topics but also different levels of subject matter presentations, and that teachers wish to have the choice of participating in formal or non-formal activities.

-- Many of the teachers included in the study used terms which suggest that they perceive themselves as being isolated and powerless members of a large impersonal organization. It is suggested that the school system should make every effort to ensure that teachers are and perceive themselves to be important, contributing members of the organization who have some control over the various aspects of their professional life.

-- Since many teachers mentioned feelings of isolation and indicated that they consider in-school contacts with colleagues to be an important form of non-formal inservice education, it is suggested that the school system should deliberately foster such teacher initiated consultations.

-- A special effort should be made by the school system to cater to the needs of teachers who are the only subject specialists in their schools as such teachers feel particularly isolated and neglected. They are deprived of ongoing, in-school contacts with colleagues who have the same area of specialization and often their needs are overlooked at formal activities.

-- Given that the ultimate goal of inservice education is to ensure that students receive the best educational experiences possible, it is suggested that perhaps a portion of in-school professional development funds could be devoted to activities of a practical nature which directly relate to and benefit the classroom experiences of students.

-- At present formal inservice education activities do not appear to be evaluated, at least not in any strict sense of the term. If in the future an evaluation of these activities is considered to be desirable, it is suggested that since many of the benefits derived by participants are of an intangible nature, both traditional and non-traditional evaluation methods should be used.

-- In order to meet all the inservice education needs of teachers, it is suggested that school systems continue their present policy of providing in-school professional development funds and organizing formal inservice education activities. Formal activities should be restructured in a manner that reflects the findings of this study; the nature and value of non-formal activities should be acknowledged. On school days when students are released from classes, teachers should be able to participate in whatever activities of a formal or non-formal nature they consider will best meet their needs. In addition, it is suggested that school systems consider introducing voluntary teacher-to-teacher networks similar to IMPACT II (Mann, 1982) for the reasons already cited.

-- It is suggested that the school system could use the instrument developed by the researcher (Figure 1) to ascertain the needs that teachers desire to have satisfied by attending the various groups of inservice activities, and the value attributed to each group of activity. Such information could help avoid a mismatch between the goals of organizers and participants. Although the particular presentations desired will not be revealed by the instrument, the teachers could easily indicate on the instrument the desired topics. In addition, it is suggested that the same instrument could be used to evaluate the success of the activity in meeting the needs of participants.

A Suggestion for the University

The teachers included in the study consider the university to be a salary upgrading, degree-granting institution. They do not consider it to play a significant role in their inservice education. It is a place to which they turn when they want in-depth knowledge or a guest speaker. But, when they seek information which will help them improve their effectiveness in the classroom, they turn elsewhere because, in their eyes, professors lack credibility; they are too far and too long removed from the world of the school and the classroom teacher to be able to offer assistance.

When revisiting the literature, however, the researcher read an evaluation of an innovative approach to university involvement in inservice education which is in accord with teachers' perspectives on inservice education as identified in this study. It is suggested that if this or a similar model were widely adopted the notion of a university preservice-inservice continuum would be fostered and teachers would be encouraged to perceive the university as playing an active and useful role in their inservice education. The University of Calgary (Unruh, 1981) introduced the concept of the one-quarter course to enhance and enrich the current classroom practices of teachers. It appears that attending these short courses satisfies needs similar to those identified by the teachers included in this study: attending the short courses was found to be a morale booster because the information presented reinforced what the teachers were already doing; the teachers' instructional practices were revitalized; they were made aware of diverse methods of instruction; and, present practices were found to be appropriate and acceptable. Other findings agree with statements made by the teachers included in this study: when more than one teacher from the same school took the course, they supported each other in implementing the knowledge from the course; the teachers viewed positively participating in courses that presented information which was immediately applicable to their jobs, and which allowed them to experiment with materials which they could take to their own classrooms for short-term use; the fact that the courses were taught by practising teachers and facilitated and encouraged the sharing of ideas was viewed positively; and, the participants felt they could trust the ideas because their colleagues had actually used them.

Recommendations for the University

Following are recommendations for the university, based on the findings of this study, which, it is suggested, would permit the university to play a more active role in the continuing education of teachers, other than simply enabling teachers to accumulate credits towards advanced degrees.

- The university should offer a wide variety of short-term credit and non-credit, off-campus and on-campus courses similar to those evaluated by Unruh (1981) which are organized in accordance with teachers' perspectives on inservice education.
- The university should take steps to deliberately foster the development of a preservice-inservice continuum. In particular, preservice education students should be exposed to the concept of lifelong continuing teacher education and the various types of formal and non-formal ways in which teachers can continue their inservice education. Undergraduate education students should be encouraged to attend formal inservice education activities as part of their teacher education training; attending such activities should help to develop a feeling of professionalism and collegiality.
- As Kersh (1979:45) states, "college faculty still act as if inservice is 'doin' something to somebody or running something for somebody'." The university should encourage an on-going two-way exchange of ideas between university faculty and teachers in the classroom.

-- University professors in the faculty of education should be involved in a continuing professional education program, a major component of which would be regular, in-depth classroom experiences. It is hoped that such a program would help to enhance the credibility of university professors in the eyes of teachers.

TOWARDS THE GENERATION OF SUBSTANTIVE THEORY

Glaser and Strauss (1965a, 1967) advocate the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research, which they call grounded theory, as opposed to theory generated from a priori assumptions. They define a theory in sociology as:

> ... a strategy for handling data in research, providing modes of conceptualization for describing and explaining. The theory should provide clear enough categories and hypotheses so that crucial ones can be verified in present and future research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:3).

They believe that:

> If the analyst starts with raw data, he will end up initially with a substantive theory: a theory for the substantive area on which he has done research (for example, patient care or gang behavior) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:114).

They consider that grounded substantive theory:

> ... can give participants in a situation a broader guide to what they already tend to do, and perhaps help them to be more effective in doing it (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:248).

Turner (1981:226) agrees that:

> (grounded theory) promotes the development of theoretical accounts and explanations which conform closely to the situations being observed, so that the theory is likely to be intelligible to, and usable by, those in the situations studied.

Turner (1981:227) considers that the grounded theory approach is likely to be of maximum use when it deals with qualitative data of the kind gathered from participant observation, from the observation of face-to-face interaction, from semi-structured or unstructured interviews, from case study material and from certain kinds of documentary sources.

In this study an inductive, analytical and descriptive approach was adopted following the general procedures recommended by Glaser and Strauss and using in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observation to gather the data. The categories which emerged from the coding process reveal certain shared teachers' conceptions of inservice education. Although the researcher did not promise that the study would generate substantive theory, based on the findings an attempt will be made to suggest some substantive theory or "minor working hypotheses of everyday life" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:33).

Tentative Hypotheses

The following tentative hypotheses are suggested in an attempt to predict and explain teachers' attitude and behavior in relation to inservice education.

-- There is a mismatch between the goals of those attending formal inservice education activities and those writing about or organizing such activities. Only at formal inservice education activities organized in conjunction with a compulsory program change do the goals of the participants and organizers coincide and agree with the assumptions made in the literature. Teachers attend such activities in order to obtain information which they will use to change their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness.

-- Teachers consider formal inservice education activities that do not accompany a compulsory program change to be information sessions not sessions designed to immediately change their classroom behavior.

-- Teachers consider formal inservice education activities that do not accompany a compulsory program change to have little relationship to their day-by-day classroom activities.

-- Teachers attend formal inservice education activities that do not accompany a compulsory program change in order to satisfy lower level cognitive needs or needs in the affective domain.

-- Most teachers are not dissatisfied with their present classroom practices and attend formal inservice education activities which do not accompany a compulsory program change in order to obtain confirmation that their present classroom practices are acceptable and appropriate, not to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their present classroom behavior.

-- Teachers readily adopt new techniques and materials which require no major changes in their present classroom behavior or ideology. They adopt innovations which require a major change in their classroom behavior in crisis situations only, or when they are compelled to do so because of a compulsory program change.

-- Teachers do not adopt an innovation which requires a major change in their classroom behavior until they have been exposed to the innovation on several occasions over an extended period of time.

-- There is an identifiable pattern to the inservice education needs of teachers which changes over time as the individual moves along his career path from neophyte to experienced teacher. When a teacher changes grades, area of specialization or is promoted, however, initially in the new position he tends to function as a neophyte.

-- Teachers who have satisfied most of their inservice education needs at all levels from deficiency to growth seek new challenges by changing grades, areas of specialization or seeking promoted positions.

-- Teachers obtain information which they use to effect major changes in their classroom behavior and so improve their effectiveness as teachers from their involvement in a variety of non-formal inservice education activities, not from their involvement in formal inservice education activities, apart from those activities which accompany a compulsory program change.

- -- One cannot truly understand the world of another unless one lives in that world. Consequently, in order for university professors to be able to offer classroom-related assistance to teachers, they must regularly live in the world of the classroom teacher.
- -- Teachers who are deprived of ongoing, in-school contacts with colleagues who have the same area of specialization suffer from extreme feelings of isolation and are deprived of an important source of information for improving their clasroom effectiveness.
- -- When introducing new programs, in order to have teachers make the necessary changes in their classroom behavior, such programs must be accompanied by in-school time formal inservice education activities given by classroom teachers with expertise in the area.
- -- Teachers use a cost-benefit formula to determine whether or not to attend voluntary formal inservice education activities.

Connections with Existing Theory

Once substantive theory has been generated, connections should be made, where relevant, to existing theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Turner, 1981). The researcher suggests that the theory of cognitive dissonance can make a useful contribution towards a further understanding of teachers' beliefs and activities in relation to inservice education.

The lack of educational reform at the classroom level, despite decades of formal inservice education activities, has long been lamented. An important finding of this study suggests a reason for the low teacher adoption rate of educational innovations: teachers, in general, are not dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and attend formal inservice education activities in order to obtain confirmation that their present practices are appropriate and acceptable, not to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior. The theory of cognitive dissonance suggests an explanation for this finding.

> The basic background of this theory consists of the notion that the human organism tries to establish internal harmony, consistency, or congruity among his opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and values. That is, there is a drive toward consonance among cognitions (260) ... forced or accidental exposure to new information may create cognitive elements that are dissonant with existing cognition (261) ... forced or accidental exposure to new information which tends to increase dissonance will frequently result in misinterpretation and misperception of the new information by the person thus exposed in an effort to avoid a dissonance increase (Festinger, 1957:265).

When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the individual will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance (Festinger, 1957:3). Festinger indicates the circumstances that make it difficult for the person to change his actions: the change may be painful or involve loss; the present behavior may be satisfying; or, making the change simply may not be possible (Festinger, 1957:25,26).

The foregoing may help account for teachers' desiring formal inservice education activities that confirm their present behavior or give them information and materials that will enliven their present practices but require no major change in ideology or current practices, their choosing not to incorporate new behaviors into their repertoire of skills even though they acknowledge that the practices have merit, and some teachers' avoidance of formal inservice education activities. Hence the relatively unchanging nature of teacher classroom behavior.

Following are some hypotheses suggested by the findings of the study and their interpretation in the light of the theory of cognitive dissonance.

-- Teachers deliberately seek out formal inservice education activities which confirm present practices because at such activities the threat of cognitive dissonance is reduced.

-- Teachers perceive formal inservice education activities as information sessions, not as dictates to change their behavior, in order to reduce the possibility of cognitive dissonance.

-- Exposure to educational innovations results in cognitive dissonance. Since individuals seek internal harmony, teachers will try to reduce dissonance and increase consonance by finding reasons for rejecting the new behavior and continuing with the old. In most instances they will be successful, except when they are compelled to change their behavior as a result of a mandatory program change. Consequently teachers perceive formal inservice education activities which accompany a mandatory curriculum change differently from the way they perceive other formal inservice education activities.

-- The importance that teachers accord to non-formal inservice education activities may in part be attributed to the fact that such activities permit teachers to seek out those with a similar view of the world and thus teachers can deliberately avoid interactions which would lead to cognitive dissonance.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally it has been assumed that teachers attend formal inservice education activities because they are dissatisfied with their present classroom behavior and wish to improve their effectiveness by changing their behavior in the manner advocated at the presentation. Such an assumption, which forms the rationale for the organization of formal inservice education activities, appears to be inaccurate. Only at those activities which are organized in conjunction with a mandatory program change do the goals of participants and organizers agree and support the assumptions made in the literature; that is, teachers attend such activities in order to obtain information which they will use to effect a major change in their classroom behavior.

Teachers do endeavor to provide their students with the best learning experiences possible. The methods they use, however, to maintain or improve their effectiveness in the classroom tend not to be those assumed in the literature or by organizers, that is through their involvement with formal inservice education activities, but rather through their involvement in a variety of non-formal inservice education activities, the most important of which is considered to be ongoing in-school contacts with colleagues, in particular with those colleagues who share a similar teaching assignment.

Thus based on the findings of this study, it appears that formal inservice education activities which do not accompany a mandatory program change are not an appropriate method to use to effect a major change in the classroom behavior of teachers. These activities, however, do serve a very useful purpose as attending them permits teachers to satisfy certain basic and essential needs in the affective and lower level cognitive domains, needs which otherwise might be neglected. Consequently, such activities should be considered worthwhile and should continue to be organized for teachers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MEMO: REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS

APPENDIX A

to: Staff

from: Morag Pansegrau
Doctoral Student
Educational Administration
University of Alberta

DISSERTATION TOPIC: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I would like to talk informally with teachers (defn.: any person with a teaching certificate) to determine their views on professional development in general, and inservice education in particular. I can meet with you at any time convenient to you--before classes, at lunch-time, in your spare, after classes. I would like to hear your views, even though you have only a few minutes to spare. If you would care to talk with me, please complete the form at the foot of the page and return the form to the principal's office.

Thank you.

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

NAME: PHONE NO.:

Department/Grade:

Preferred meeting times:

DAY TIME LOCATION

APPENDIX B

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP ONE

APPENDIX B

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP ONE

Teachers' wants re inservice.

Reasons for inservice.

Complaints re inservice (not professional development days).

Teachers' attitudes towards inservice.

Frequency of inservice.

Benefits of professional development days.

Benefits of inservice--overt; covert.

Teachers' desires re inservice.

Teachers' desires re professional development days.

Teachers' opinions re their professional development.

Present methods used by individual teachers to continue their professional development.

Complaints re professional development days.

Definitions: inservice; professional development.

Concerns of a general nature.

Forms of inservice.

Comments re central office.

Preferred/desired topics.

Views of administrators.

Comments re actual presenters; desired presenters.

Views of teacher-inservice presenters.

Changes in views re inservice education over time.

Comments re attendance and timing.

Comments re university.

Difficulties/problems re inservice.

APPENDIX C

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP TWO

APPENDIX C

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP TWO

1. What teachers want from organized inservice activities.
2. What teachers want from professional development days.
3. Complaints regarding organized inservice activities.
4. Complaints regarding professional development days.
5. Benefits derived from attending organized inservice activities.
6. Benefits derived from attending professional development days.
7. Teachers' attitudes towards organized inservice activities.
8. Teachers' attitudes towards professional development days.
9. Difficulties/problems relating to inservice activities.
10. Attitudes/opinions regarding one's own professional development.
11. Non-formal/organized inservice activities, as described by teachers.
12. Teachers' definitions of inservice, professional development.
13. Comments relating to topics.
14. Comments relating to presenters--actual; ideal.
15. Comments made by teachers who are also inservice presenters.
16. Changes in attitude towards inservice education over time.
17. Comments relating to attendance and timing of organized inservice activities.
18. Views of administrators who fall under the definition of 'teacher.'
19. Comments relating to the university.
20. Comments relating to central office.
21. Comments of a general nature made during the interview.

APPENDIX D

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP THREE

APPENDIX D

INITIAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA - STEP THREE

1. Teachers' definitions: inservice education; professional development.
2. What teachers want from formal inservice activities and professional development days.
3. Attitude of teachers towards formal inservice activities.
4. Benefits derived from attending formal inservice activities as perceived by teachers.
5. Teachers' criticisms regarding formal inservice activities and professional development days.
6. Teachers' views on attendance and timing of formal inservice activities.
7. Teachers' views on topics and presenters at formal inservice activities.
8. Non-formal, non-traditional forms of inservice education as perceived by teachers.
9. Attitude of teachers towards their own professional development.
10. Teachers' changes in attitude over time towards formal inservice education activities.
11. Teachers' comments relating to inservice education and the role of district office.
12. Teachers' comments relating to inservice education and the role of the university.

APPENDIX E

FINAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA

APPENDIX E

FINAL CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FROM THE DATA* +

(a) 1. Teachers' definitions. (1)

(b) 2. Attitude of teachers towards their own professional development. (9)

(c,d) 3. Attitude of teachers towards formal inservice education activities. (3)

(c,d) 4. Teachers' reasons for attending formal inservice education activities that are not a part of a compulsory program change. (2,4)

(c,d) 5. Teachers' views on topics offered at formal inservice education activities. (7)

(c,d) 6. Changes in attitude over time towards formal inservice education activities. (10)

(c,d) 7. Teachers' views on attendance and timing of formal inservice education activities. (6)

(c,d) 8. Teachers' views on presenters at formal inservice education activities. (7)

(c,d) 9. Teachers' criticisms of formal inservice education activities. (5)

(c,d) 10. Non-formal forms of inservice education. (8)

(c,d) 11. Teachers' comments relating to inservice education and the role of district office. (11)

(c,d) 12. Teachers' comments relating to inservice education and the role of the university. (12)

* Number in parenthesis indicates the number of the category in Appendix D.

+ The following four elements of a perspective, as identified by Becker, Geer, Hughes and Strauss (1961:436), form the conceptual framework used to portray teachers' perspectives on inservice education:

(a) a definition of the situation in which the actors are involved,
(b) a statement of the goals they are trying to achieve,
(c) a set of ideas specifying what kinds of activities are expedient and proper,
(d) and a set of activities or practices congruent with them.

The element is identified to the left of the category number.